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THE

MYSTERIOUS

Gentleman Farmer;

OR, THE

DISGUISES OF LOVE.

VOLUME I.

THE

MYSTERIOUS
Gentleman Farmer;

OR,

THE DISGUISES OF LOVE:

A NOVEL.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

BY JOHN CORRY,

Author of "A Satyrical View of London," &c. &c.

VOL. I.

Love, various minds does variously inspire,
It stirs in gentle Nature's gentle fire,
Like that of incense on the altar laid;
But raging flames tempestuous souls invade;
A fire that ev'ry windy passion blows,
With Pride it mounts, and with Revenge it glows.

DRYDEN.

London:
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1808.

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THE

MYSTERIOUS

GENTLEMAN FARMER.

CHAPTER I.

Description of a village—Arrival of a stranger—Village scandal—A farm is purchased by the stranger, who projects several improvements.

In the spring of 1802, a stranger arrived at the Red Lion inn, the principal place of entertainment for travellers at the village of Norton-Goodrich, in Herefordshire. This romantic village is situated on an eminence near the beautiful

river Wye, and its solitude is occasionally enlivened by the visits of pleasure in their summer excursions down that river. It consists of a few scattered houses environed with orchards and hop-gardens, which gradually rising from the northern-bank of the Wye, are sheltered by picturesque groves of oak and elm; the whole scene exhibiting a pleasing image of rural tranquillity.

The arrival of a genteel stranger in this remote hamlet, excited as much curiosity among its inhabitants, as the first appearance of a beautiful young lady in the fashionable circles. All were inquisitive

quisitive respecting the visitor, but nobody could give any information, for he came unattended, and was very reserved.

For some days after his arrival he rambled in the vicinity of the village, visited the adjacent town of Ross, and gratified his fancy with a view of the country from the spot called the Prospect, near that town. He also surveyed the interior of Ross church, gazed with the pleasure of a man of taste on its "heaven-directed spire," celebrated by Pope, and visited the tomb of Mr. John Kyrle, the man of Ross, whose remains are interred in the church; and a half-length

painting of whom adorns the shop of the only bookseller in that town.

Having thus familiarized the village and its neighbourhood to his imagination, the stranger was so well pleased with the landscape and its inhabitants, that he expressed a wish to purchase a farm, and pass the remainder of his days at Norton. As human nature is curious, and every incident, however trivial, is considered important by the untaught rustic, the stranger's determination was speedily circulated throughout the village.

Each individual made his comments

ments according to the suggestions of suspicion, prejudice, or good-nature. The retailers of scandal, and a village is the school for scandal, were pretty liberal in their inuendos that a man of the stranger's appearance must have done something amiss which compelled him to retire from the busy world, "I'm certain," cried one, "that he is no farmer, for his hands are as white as a lady's. I'll lay my life he's a French spy"—"A likely story indeed," replied a good-natured justice, "What dy'e think now could a French spy discover in this village?" "Then he must be a highwayman, for Tom, the waiter at the Lion, told me he saw a

pair of pistols in his bed-room." "And may not a man carry pistols without robbing others; mayhap he is in the volunteer cavalry." "Well, well, may be so, I'd forgot that."

. . . . . .

Such were the ideas of the clowns concerning the stranger. As for the female part of this little community, he did not appear of sufficient consequence to engage their attention. It is true he had an air of gentility, but he was a middle aged man, and his dress was plain. A young high fed ruddy footman, decorated with a laced livery, would have appeared a more beautiful and interesting object in the

the eyes of these illiterate and undiscerning women. His hostess, indeed, who was well-bred and sensible, treated him with particular respect, and told her husband "she was certain Mr. Sotheran was a gentleman." An opinion which met the coincidence of her spouse, who never ventured to contradict his wife.

In the course of a week after Mr. Sotheran's arrival at Norton-Goodrich, he purchased a farm of fifty acres, part of which reached to the verge of the river Wye. The security required was five hundred pounds; and the purchaser taking out his pocket book,

deposited the sum in bank notes, saying, "There is my security."

The report of this transaction in the village, corroborated the idea amongst the malignant, that he was no better than he should be, while others contended that a man might be rich and honest. They all agreed in one sentiment, which seems generally adopted in the world, that an opulent person is entitled to particular respect, and thenceforth, whenever they met Mr. Sotheran, they instinctively pulled off their hats; not so much out of veneration for his person as his purse: A very common practice in all civilized communities.

Mr.

Mr. Sotheran now devoted his attention to the improvement of his farm. It was left in a high state of cultivation by the late proprietor; the cornfields, meadows, and pastures were all in exuberant bloom, and a large orchard presented the vivid efflorescence of May. There were, however, several requisites yet wanting to complete our agriculturist's plan of improvement. The old farmhouse was in a state of decay, though habitable, and he resolved to erect another mansion on a hill near the Wye. He also furnished a team of horses for his plough and waggon; hired several husbandmen of good character, who had families to support. As for

the employment of his time, it was varied between his attention to the progressive state of vegetation in his fields; the labour of his men; various excursions on horseback; frequent walks along the banks of the river, which presented a variety of picturesque objects, and reading, which had ever been his favourite amusement. He lodged at the house of a farmer in the vicinity of his own premises, till the completion of his projected improvements, and he found a comfortable and pleasant abode in the mansion of Farmer Greenhill.

CHAP-

CHAPTER II.

A description of Rose-hill cottage—institution of a free-school in the village—Knowledge injurious to the common people—A farmer's family—The happiness of a cottage restored—A farmer's daughter in love—Her person and accomplishments—Eulogium on fashionable education.

DURING the summer Mr. Sotheran pursued his plan of improvements with unremitted application. In the calm seclusion of Norton, he hoped to regain that tranquillity which he had lost in the crowded

capital, and instead of the late hours and pernicious excesses of the town, he now lived according to the dictates of temperance and reason, retired early to repose, in imitation of his industrious neighbours, and like them arose with the sun and resumed his business. Being little acquainted with the practical part of agriculture, he engaged a skilful farmer, who undertook the management of his farm for a moderate salary, and his fertile fields repaid the toil and expence bestowed upon them, by a crop at once beautiful and productive.

Nor was our agriculturist less fortunate

fortunate in the construction of his cottage. An architect, who had built several of the most elegant mansions in that part of Herefordshire, erected Rose-hill cottage on a plan at once simple, convenient, and beautiful. The front faced the river Wye; an extensive prospect of rural scenery presented the varieties of cultured hill and dale, wood, water, farm houses, cottages, orchards, gardens, hop-grounds, corn-fields, and pastures, in succession. From a small observatory on the top there was a distinct view of part of the town of Ross, beyond which the Monmouthshire hills appeared in distinct and majestic grandeur.

Eight

Eight apartments appropriated to the different purposes of refection, study, and repose, constituted the whole of the cottage. Four of them were on the ground floor, and four comprized the upper story, which was crowned with the observatory before mentioned. A shrubbery and garden of one acre, partly extending before the front of the cottage, and partly forming two small wings inclosed by pales, gave an air of elegance to this little recess, and the business of erecting the cottage, and laying out the shrubbery and garden, was pursued with such diligence, that in a few months the mansion was habitable.

But

But Mr. Sotheran's whole attention was not engrossed by his own improvements; he also wished to contribute to the happiness of others. Beholding with regret the ignorance and vulgar vice that prevailed in Norton, he resolved to attempt the reformation of his neighbours as well as his own. The first step in this laudable work was the establishment of a free-school. The old farm-house on his own estate was sufficiently capacious to contain all the children in Norton, he therefore did not ostentatiously erect a handsome new building to attract the curiosity of strangers, but offered a decent salary to a schoolmaster duly qualified

qualified for the instruction of youth. A person adequate to this important trust soon made application, he was engaged and established with his family in the old farm-house, and a general and pressing invitation was sent to every parent in Norton, requesting them to send their children to the school.

The novelty, as well as the benevolence of this institution, charmed the untaught inhabitants of Norton, who had often regretted their own ignorance, and rejoiced at this favourable opportunity of having their children instructed gratuitously. Children of both sexes

sexes, to the number of twenty, were immediately sent to the school, and a much greater number followed as soon as they could make a decent appearance. But while the honest villager secretly rejoiced in this unexpected introduction of knowledge, the insidious part of this rustic community expressed their malignant sneers. "So, Thomas, you have sent your boy to the charity school; well, for my part my children shall want learning before I beg it for them. Besides, for aught I know, they are better without it. All those who are hanged for forgery must be good scholars, and I do not wish my son to be trained for the gallows.

Nay, this Mr. Sotheran may be a good sort of man, but our parson, Measter Crabtree, told us but yesterday, that such doings could come to no good; that this stranger must be either a methodist or presbyterian, for he has not yet been at church since he came; and that too much learning only made poor folks proud, unwilling to work, disrespectful to their betters, and disloyal." "Well, Ned" replied the other rustic, "I must own that these are heavy charges against learning, but surely it can be no crime to have our children taught to read the bible, and to write a little." "No; no" rejoined the other, taking up his hoe,

and walking away to work, " I cannot think it is, but the parson knows better than you or me, Tom." " Fie on such Parsons, I say" cried the other warmly, " pray what made him fit to preach but learning, and if he does not preach more charitable doctrine, I think he had better hold his tongue."

All the opposition of ignorant malignity, or clerical pride, however, did not impede the progress of knowledge at Norton free-school, and Mr. Sotheran had the satisfaction, in his daily visit to the little seminary, to discover that the master was assiduous

duous and the children docile. Knowledge and propriety of manners were gradually introduced, and children instructed in the elements of morality became more obedient to their parents, respectful to their neighbours, and affectionate to one another.

While Mr. Sotheran was thus instrumental to the good of others, he also became a better man and a more useful member of society. Regularity of life was productive of health and serenity, and he gradually forgot his follies and misfortunes in the peaceful groves that extended their lofty branches along the banks of the Wye.

Even

Even the persons with whom he associated in his hours of refection and leisure, were calculated to inspire him with cheerfulness. It has been already mentioned, that soon after his arrival at Norton he had removed from the inn to the house of a neighbouring farmer, where he was accommodated with board and lodging.

Farmer Greenhill's family consisted of his dame, and three blooming daughters, whose innocent hilarity enlivened his social hours. On the first introduction of their lodger, the young women were reserved and bashful, but the urbanity of Mr. Sotheran's manners

manners and his pleasing conversation gradually led to a more friendly intercourse; and as he was supplied with books which the carrier from Ross conveyed to his lodgings, the girls, and even their mother, rejoiced when in the evening, after tea, their lodger amused their imagination with some of the best productions in history, poetry, and romance. Lucinda, the youngest daughter, was particularly gratified with those literary novelties which, as Sterne observes, "scatters our pathway with roses of delight." Affecting descriptions of the operations of the social passions in trying situations—the parting of Hector and

and Andromache, so exquisitely described by the Meönian bard, and translated by Pope;—the virtue of Coriolanus, whose filial affection prevailed even over the love of life;—the magnanimity of the honourable Virginius, who sacrificed his beloved daughter to preserve her chastity inviolate,—and the patriotic heroism of St. Pierre and his five compatriots, who voluntarily offered their lives to save those of their relatives and the other townsmen of Calais, forced the pearly tears in profusion from the beautiful eyes of Lucinda; and while her sisters, less susceptible of the impressions of sympathy and sensibility, perhaps sighed, or sometimes rallied

rallied her on what she termed childish sorrow, Mr. Sotheran beheld the honest effusions of her good and tender heart with secret approbation.

Lucinda, in common with the majority of the villagers, considered farmer Sotheran as a superior; and her respect was rather increased than diminished by a more intimate acquaintance with him. An interesting event raised his merit still higher in her estimation.

William Hinton, an aged cottager, who held his little tenement with a garden, at the yearly rent of three pounds, was from the infirmities

firmities of old age incapable of earning a sufficient livelihood, and consequently was two years in arrear when, on the demise of his landlord, the farm devolved to the next heir; an unfeeling worldly minded young man, who insisted on the old cottager either paying the money due, or quitting the spot where he had passed so many years in rural happiness. The severity of the young farmer, and the destitute situation of old Hinton and his dame, who were the Darby and Joan of the village, became a general topic, and though the inhabitants of Norton were unanimous in their censure of the farmer's want of feeling, none of

them suggested a plan for the relief of the aged couple. Their story reached Mr. Sotheran, whose sympathetic heart vibrated in unison with the joys and sorrows of his neighbours. He went to the cottage, where he found old Hinton and his wife ruminating over their misfortune, and like our first parents dreading the approach of the moment when they were to be expelled from their paradise. Mr. Sotheran promised them his protection, and left them with their eyes glistening with gratitude. He then called on their landlord, to whom he paid the six pounds due for rent, and purchased the cottage and garden for twenty pounds.

Next

Next day, as soon as the lease was signed, he went and presented it to the old man, saying, "Now William no man can dispossess you, may you live long to enjoy the comforts of your little estate. Hinton was speechless with surprise, gratitude and admiration, and

"Albeit unused to the melting mood,"

tears of gratitude coursed down the furrows of his venerable cheeks. His benefactor hastily retired, and although an injunction of secrecy had been given, dame Hinton could not, or would not conceal the generosity of her benefactor.

This transaction, so unlike those which had occurred in Norton, excited a strong emotion in the minds of the villagers. Several of the farmers, it is true, were good neighbours, and would willingly lend or borrow the implements of husbandry, nay sometimes they went so far as to lend money for a few days for mutual accommodation. But the idea of giving away money was totally inconsistent with the maxims of rural economy; the liberality of farmer Sotheran, therefore, came "*in such a questionable shape,*" that all the low insinuations which envy and malevolence could suggest, were revived to the prejudice of

of his character. The narrow-minded were of opinion that he must be either a knave or a fool; a man who had not obtained his money honestly, or one who did not know how to expend it. The payment of old Hinton's arrears was, they acknowledged, very generous, but the making a purchase of his little tenement, and presenting it to him, was going too far. Why did not farmer Sotheran bestow the twenty pounds for the support of the parish workhouse, and thereby diminish the poor-rates? This would have been of general benefit to all. Such were the aspersions of the malignant, who,

" Blam'd that excellence they could not reach."

But common sense and humanity induced the majority of the villagers to appreciate the merit of this benevolent action, and instead of regarding farmer Sotheran as a suspicious character, they applauded his benevolence, and prayed for his prosperity.

Lucinda Greenhill was among the warmest of his admirers on this occasion, and she felt her vanity gratified by the reflection, that he was an inmate under her father's roof. Esteem and respect for him, were mingled in her youthful bosom; but she did not entertain

entertain the most distant idea of a softer passion for a man so many years older than herself, and whose personal appearance was not attractive. But Lucinda was unacquainted with the facility with which approbation for one of the other sex assumes the form of affection. She loved farmer Sotheran, while she thought she only esteemed him; and the animated blush which lightened over her modest aspect, when she heard the sound of his voice, and the delirious sensations which filled her heart while she beheld him with the timid glance of virgin observation, soon convinced her that friend-

ship was too cold a name for her attachment to Sotheran.

The feelings of the farmer were, however, by no means in unison with those of Lucinda. His affairs were yet in a state of uncertainty. He had indeed adopted an excellent system of economy with respect to his own expenditure, and by a temporary seclusion from polished society, he was enabled to carry his benevolent designs into effect in the tranquil scenes of rural life. Had his mind been disengaged, it would have been difficult for him, or any man of feeling, to have continued long in the society of Lucinda Greenhill,

hill, without receiving from her fair eyes the purest flame of love.

This innocent and amiable girl was nearly eighteen; she was beautiful, but the definitions of beauty are so various, and our ideas respecting comeliness of form and perfection of feature are so indefinite, that were a particular description of her attractions detailed at length, some readers would consider our heroine an insipid country gawky, and others would extol her as a paragon of excellence. But Lucinda was neither. Her well proportioned person required not the aid of art; her blooming face was unused to any cosmetic,

except pure water; and her health, cherished by the fragrant breezes, was invigorated by exercise and established by temperance. She was skilled in all the useful arts which render the housewife so respectable in her station, and instead of sacrificing the simplicity of her character in the acquisition of French, music, and the other accomplishments which false taste and affectation have introduced as requisites in the education of females, Lucinda was taught to read, write, and sew, and these few acquirements constituted the whole of her learning. Not that she was deficient in the ornamental accomplishments of music and dancing,

but

but they were not the whole business of her life, they were always subservient to the indispensible duties of her situation as a daughter attentive to the instructions of an industrious mother, and her assistant in housekeeping. In the art of rendering home comfortable, Lucinda became eminently qualified. The dairy, which was under her superintendance, was purity itself, and her butter and chesse were extoll'd by all visitors for their delicacy. Every apartment in the house was kept in a state of neatness and cleanliness, at once conducive to health and pleasant to the eye. The activity of this amiable young wo-

man, relieved her mother from the solicitude attendant on the regulation of a family, and while the culinary part of the domestic business was transacted by her sisters, Lucinda was the housekeeper who directed all.

Such was the farmer's daughter of Norton, whose industry cannot with propriety be recommended to the imitation of the ladies. What! the ladies stoop to become imitators of a village maid! Preposterous idea! They know the value of life too well to waste it in the vulgar occupations, of the dairy or the kitchen. Such grovelling pursuits are far beneath the

the attention of angelic beings with white hands and varnished faces, and for whose decorations Venus herself contributes her bloom, and perhaps some youthful milk-maid her luxuriant locks. Indeed the wretched affectation introduced by the false refinement and childish accomplishments of a boarding school, seems to have reduced our ladies to a situation little superior to that of a puppet. They are at best only animated toys, and like the ornaments manufactured in Birmingham, if divested of their gilding, disgust would succeed admiration. It is a most wretched perversion of the human understanding, to sanction by the

fiat of fashion, a mode of education, which universally renders young ladies totally helpless and useless to themselves and others. As for the boasted advantages obtained at school, what do they amount to, when placed in opposition to the humble domestic arts which render home so delightful? The pestiferous influence of false refinement has indeed been hitherto confined principally to what the courtesy of mankind has termed high life, or in other words a life of ostentation, folly, insignificance, and vice; but the absurd ambition of tradesfolks to have their sons and daughters educated in a fashionable manner, will, should it become

become general, fill the streets with affected puppies and kept mistresses. Nothing can preserve youth from the foul contagion of the vices of our nobility, but an early reverence for the duties of religion, regard for propriety of conduct, and those habits of industry which will prevent young persons from the necessity of resorting to frivolous amusements to kill time,

At present a taste for drawing and music is cultivated in the female mind as an indispensible accomplishment; and girls are permitted to expose their want of abilities, by their exhibition of drawings,

drawings, by which they do not violate the second commandment; their flowers, fruits, insects, and landscapes not having a likeness to any thing in nature. Yet the vanity of the poor artist is flattered by some mercenary instructor, whose interest it is to multiply the lessons of his pupil, and the idiot smile of some credulous parent confirms the daughter in the opinion that she will soon become an eminent painter. In music, the same perversion of common sense and waste of time and application is observable; for while miss squeaks to her pianoforte, to the great delight of her auditors, the harmony of her mind is untuned,

untuned, and her intolerable vanity and levity prepare her for the flattery of some gay seducer. The art of dancing, while it contributes to the gracefulness and agility of youth, has a tendency to promote licentiousness; and the affectation introduced by the study, if it can be called study, of the French language, has changed education into a farce. In fact our young ladies are much better qualified for the public stage, than to shine as nature intended they should, the ornaments of domestic life; and the sanction of one soft-headed peer, who after dangling for years in the train of "a copper-tailed actress" completed his absurdity, by

a

a matrimonial union, and the example of another nobleman, who ingloriously retired from the public service to wanton in the arms of another painted daughter of Thespis, bids fair to restore the reign of folly and vice to the exalted rank which they attained in the reign of Charles II. Would any man of common understanding, risk his felicity by an union with a young woman educated according to the present false taste? or prefer the embraces of an arch girl, initiated in all the mysteries of the toilette, to the sweet smiles of unvarnished beauty, and the spontaneous affection of an uncorrupted heart?

CHAP-

CHAPTER III.

The sorrows of concealed love—a modern fashionable lady's choice—Haymaking—a dialogue on love—a young merchant the votary of Venus.

WHILE Lucinda Greenhill secretly cherished the most delightful of the human passions, she became herself the object of tenderness. At an evening visit to the family of a neighbouring farmer, she was introduced to Edward Jones, a young tradesman from Bristol, who came to spend a few weeks for health and recreation among his relatives at Norton. Mr. Jones beheld

beheld the blooming Lucinda with admiration, her conversation was peculiarly interesting to a young man just retired from the bustle of an opulent city; and notwithstanding the comparative rusticity, or rather simplicity of her manners, the citizen was charmed with her modesty of demeanour, and the pertinence of her observations. Lucinda for her part received much gratification from the sprightly and amusing manner in which Mr. Jones described Bristol and its inhabitants: and the native candour of his disposition insensibly gained her esteem. The evening passed pleasantly away in that inno-

cent

cent hilarity and agreeable chit chat, which gives one of its most pleasing charms to social intercourse, and Jones, with his two cousins, the Miss Willoughbys, accompanied Lucinda to her father's door. Such was the commencement of an acquaintance between these two amiable young people, which was afterwards a source of misery to Mr. Jones.

Although Lucinda's growing affection for farmer Sotheran was for a moment suppressed by occasional amusements, yet in retirement it regained its influence with a paramount sway which banished every other object from her youthful

ful heart. A mournful presentiment oftentimes overwhelmed her hopes. "Perhaps he loves another" she sometimes whispered, while the tear of sorrowful affection dropped on her pillow, "Perhaps he is married!" exclaimed she, with a half-suppressed shriek; "if so I am miserable indeed, for alas I love him!" "It is not thy personal appearance, my beloved Sotheran," she softly whispered, apostrophising him—"Thou hast neither youth nor beauty to allure my fancy; it is that celestial goodness, that pure charity and kind sensibility of thy mind, that has conquered my heart, I love a man, to whom my passion is a secret, and sooner

will

will I die than discover it" continued the artless maid, while a virgin blush mantled over her face and beauteous bosom. Such were the private reflections of Lucinda, and such the domineering passion which had taken possession of her soul. All the perturbations, hopes and fears of love, alternately filled her mind, and she would have been unhappy had she not been innocent.

Yet amid her doubts and fears hope was predominant. She was not unconscious of her attractions, and she knew that Sotheran held her in high estimation. He had often expressed the most unquali-

fied approbation of her moral sentiments, and praised her taste as she modestly commented on interesting passages in history and poetry, and he often hinted, that with application her mind might attain a high degree of improvement. These hints were not neglected, and Lucinda resolved to make herself more worthy of the conversation of a man to whose superiority of intellect her heart as well as her reason assented.

It was indeed that mental excellence which enamoured the artless bosom of a village maid, and love assailed her gentle mind in the guise of wisdom. An attachment

tachment so singular has seldom occurred, and methinks I hear the coquets of the day exclaim,—" What an idiot she must be! What woman of spirit could love a humdrum fellow in the decline of life, and who buried himself alive in the dull scenes of a country village? Give me a *dashing* devil, who sports his coach and six; who can occasionally lose a few hundreds at a rout with a good grace; act the part of a hero at Brandenburgh-house theatre; hit his man at the distance of twelve paces in a duel; allow me ten thousand a year pin-money; debauch my fille de chambre; and overlook any fashionable coquetry

with a handsome young officer! That's the man for me!

The interesting visit of Lucinda, was not forgotten by Mr. Jones, who accompanied his cousins to farmer Greenhill's on the following afternoon. Mr. Sotheran was absent, being busily engaged in haymaking, but Miss Willoughby, who was desirous to introduce her cousin to this extraordinary farmer, went with the little party to invite him to tea.

They found the farmer and his friendly haymakers, seated beneath the shade of a noble oak. He was busied filling out ale for their refreshment,

freshment, while he amused the rustic train with his cheerful conversation. On the approach of the ladies he arose, and invited them with a smile to a participation of the grassy seat and wholesome beverage. Mr. Jones was introduced, and seemed struck with the genteel air and superior address of the farmer. Soon afterward the lively rustics resumed their employments, the hay was briskly turned into the fervid sunshine, and enlivening breeze, and its grateful fragrance was diffused over a considerable space.

During the elegant evening repast a very lively conversation

took place without any admixture of scandal, an ingredient so indispensible at the tea-table in London. Our rural party, however, contrived to be witty and innocent, and the only pensive individual was the tender Lucinda, whose suppressed sighs and tremulous accents partly discovered the state of her heart.

Miss Willoughby rallied her friend on her apparent pensiveness. "I protest, Lucinda," said she, "I'm rather alarmed for you child—you are certainly in love; you have such a piteous woe-begone aspect, that he must be an inhuman mortal indeed who would not

not compassionate your sufferings. Perhaps it is this cousin of mine; if so, I wish he had continued at Bristol, for I would not see you unhappy for any consideration. Lucinda blushed, and reproved her companion by a look, but the other continued, "For my part, I have hitherto escaped the darts of the blind urchin, and cannot determine whether your disease be really love or the vapours; perhaps this gay citizen can inform us. "No, my dear" replied Jones, with a sigh, "I am no adept in the occult science of love, and till within these two days I never in the smallest degree felt its influence; my attention to the fair

has hitherto been a distant and respectful adoration, similar to what the ancients paid to Venus." "Gallantly expressed!" exclaimed the lady, "but I must confess cousin Jones, that you have rather alarmed me: Miss Lucinda enchained and yourself somewhat infected since your arrival! you will transform our village into a second Arcadia, where we shall have nothing but enamoured shepherds and dying milk-maids. Who knows but the contagion may infect me! I am terrified at the bare idea! Pray, Mr. Sotheran, do you know of any prefentive to love? As it is sometimes described as a fever, perhaps you have some febrifuge

brifuge in your pharmacopœia which might relieve poor Lucinda." "I hope her indisposition will require no other remedy than a night's sound repose," replied Sotheran smiling, and taking Lucinda's hand, "her pulse is regular, her heart is virtuous, and though it is possible that Cupid may have invaded our blissful bowers, "where every gale is pearl, and every grove is melody;"—I do not think that the most exalted and ennobling passion of the human heart should be classed among diseases. It generally proceeds from the most invigorated health." "Alack a daisy, Mr. Sotheran!" cried Miss Willoughby, "you quite frighten

me, for I am always in such excellent health and spirits, that the little winged devil will hit me as sure as I am alive. Upon my life I imagine I feel something like the sting of a bee in my side already." This raillery made the company smile. "If Miss Lucinda is really wounded," continued she, "I suppose a change of air might be salutary. What would you think, Sir, of her getting a dip in the Bath waters, or at Clifton Hot-wells? An excursion thither with my cousin Jones might prove very salutary." Jones sighed, and Lucinda, with an assumed look of cheerfulness said, "My dear Miss Willoughby may

suppress

suppress her apprehensions, and rest assured that I require a journey to neither Bath nor Bristol for the benefit of my health; as for the ailment she hinted at, we are not to trust to appearances, for who knows but she is this minute smarting under the resentment of the little blind, but powerful deity, whom she affects to despise."

After tea the party rambled along the bank of the Wye. That beautifnl river presented its translucent stream to the Wye, and in its pure waters several kinds of fish gamboled; the serene light of the setting sun threw a mo-

mentary glory over the face of nature; the groves glistened in the purple light, and the glowing west was adorned with a rich variety of colours which faded away like the hues of the rainbow; the birds paid their tributary strains to departing day, and evening came in sober majesty, crowned with her silver crescent and sparkling stars. This rural walk, so favourable to soft emotions established Lucinda's empire over the heart of Jones, and he retired from her presencewith a mingled sentiment of tenderness, hope and solicitude.

CHAP-

CHAPTER IV.

Unsuccessful love—A suicide—Mr. Sotheran indisposed—Solicitude of Lucinda Greenhill—Mutual passion of the Mysterious Farmer.

In the beginning of August farmer Sotheran's snug mansion was habitable. He had purchased plain furniture, and every requisite to render it a comfortable residence. A large book-case was filled with the works of select authors. The ancient classics, and modern literary productions which had received the sanction of the public taste, adorned

the shelves, and presented a luxurious repast to the curious mind. The different apartments were now well aired, and Patrick Kelly, who had arrived from Bath, according to his master's orders, was intrusted with the care of the house and its contents.

Mr. Sotheran purposed to remove from farmer Greenhill's to his new habitation in the course of a week, and preparations were made for a ball and supper, to which he intended to invite all the villagers without distinction; but an accident which threatened his life prevented this entertainment.

The

The passion of Mr. Jones for the lovely Lucinda could no longer be conccaled; he addressed her in the genuine language of honourable love, and urged his suit with all the ardour of a youthful admirer. But unhappily for them both, the heart of Lucinda was not now at her own disposal. Had she been at liberty to make a choice, few men could have been more worthy of her heart and hand than Jones, who was alike esteemed for his probity as a tradesman, and his excellent disposition as an individual. His person and his mind had alike many claims to female approbation. In comeliness, which is considered by the majority of the sex as a requisite in a lover, he

he was not deficient; he dressed elegantly, danced gracefully, and was agreeable in his manners, candid, and generous: yet, with all these accomplishments he was not sufficiently vivacious to make himself agreeable to the ladies, who are in general better pleased with an agreeable trifler, who can perform the little offices of an attendant with watchful assiduity, than with a man of superior endowments, who cannot stoop to such trivial attentions.

Mr. Jones's pensive disposition, however, would have been a recommendation, rather than an objection with Lucinda, had she been

free

free to choose, but her fondest affections were lavished on a man, who altogether insensible of her prepossessions, had excluded the idea of love from his injured heart. The criminality of his first wife was sufficient to deter him from risking his felicity with a second; and he resolved to devote the residue of his days to rural occupations and acts of benevolence.

The first application of Mr. Jones met with a modest denial, but as "Love will hope when reason would despair," he wrote to her, and his letter, conveyed by his cousin, Miss Willoughby, was seconded by the persuasive eloquence

of a female friend, who was in a habit of the most endearing intimacy with the object of his affection.

Miss Willoughby found her friend in a remote arbour in her father's garden. The amiable girl sat in a pensive attitude, ruminating with sorrow on her singular situation. "Solicited by a worthy young man whom I cannot love, and feeling, as I do, the warmest affection for Mr. Sotheran," she softly whispered, with sighs, "how hopeless is my state! The object of my love seems quite unconscious of his power over my mind. Alas! some previous and unfortunate attachment has

has shut his heart to tender emotions. I fear he is miserable, and I feel that I am so," said she, bursting into tears, which trickled down her fair cheeks at the moment that Miss Willoughby came tripping along the walk which led to the spot.

Lucinda had scarcely time to wipe away the lucid drops of mournful love, when her friend gaily embraced her, and with smiles acquainted her with the object of her visit. "Here is a love-letter, for you, my dear," cried she archly; "I vow I envy you, Lucinda, you are continually making new conquests." "Nay, Maria," replied

replied she, "few young women take less pains to recommend themselves to the attention of the men than I;" "Very true, but you are pretty, and were you to wear a mask the men would by some accident discover your handsome face, and admire it. Besides you are a good girl, Lucinda, and you now have it in your power to get married to one who I'm certain will be a good husband. This letter is from my cousin Jones, it contains the warm and affectionate sentiments of an honest heart, and as you are not pre-engaged I think he deserves some return to his love, for if ever there existed a true lover Jones is one." "But is my friend certain that

that my heart is free?" "Yes, I think so"—"Then I must undeceive you, my dear Maria, and divulge a secret, which, though it preys on my health, and has deprived me of tranquillity, should have been buried with me, did not the manly tenderness of Mr. Jones demand this explanation. I am myself a hopeless lover," cried she, in low mournful accents, while mingled tears and blushes overspread her cheeks. "Tell Mr. Jones, that were it not for this unfortunate attachment, the esteem which I now feel for his virtues might have ripened into affection. But my dear Maria, my whole heart is devoted to another, and I entreat you

by

by the sacred ties of friendship to conceal this secret from every human being except Mr. Jones, and to enjoin secrecy to him, as it is only the respect due to him that now wrests it from me."

Miss Willoughby was astonished, and after assurances of fidelity and secrecy, she returned home with the tidings which were fatal to the hopes of Jones. A settled melancholy now took possession of his mind; he wandered through the circumjacent farms, and along the bank of the winding Wye, but rural objects rather increased than diminished his malady. The solitude and silence of those peaceful scenes nou-

nourished his hopeless passion. Often did he exclaim with the amorous and disappointed Shenstone, while gazing on the magnificent beauties of Nature—

"Dear regions of silence and shade,
Soft scenes of contentment and ease,
Where I could have pleasingly stray'd,
If aught in her absence could please."

Miss Willoughby exerted herself to soothe the anguish of his mind, but all her gaiety and good-nature were exercised in vain. At length his disease was worked up to a pitch of frenzy, and life became intolerable. His friends entreated him to return to Bristol, but the idea of quitting a spot which was the residence of Lucinda, was intolerable. "No," he ex-

exclaimed, as he wandered in view of her father's house, "I will stay here and die, perhaps she will shed a tear of compassion upon my grave."

Suicide, that demon which infests the melancholy mind, at length presented itself in an attractive form to his distempered imagination. "Existence is now intolerable, and death can alone bring the oblivion of my woes. I shall forget even Lucinda in the grave." With this determination he wrote several letters to his intimate friends in Bristol, and sent the following love-fraught epistle to the object of his

his love, at the moment that he went to perpetrate the fatal deed:

To Miss Lucinda Greenhill.

" Dearest of Women,

" When this letter meets " your beauteous eyes, the unhappy " Jones will be no more. I could not " quit this life without bidding you a " long, a last adieu! Oh! lovely crea- " ture, your charms and your virtues " have been my ruin—my bright " prospects of earthly happiness are " forever vanished—the melancholy " of disappointed, though not de- " spised love, has clouded my reason " —I am lost.—May you be happy " for ever—I can never know hap- " piness—the shades of evening de-

" scend

" scend—the darkness of death
" overwhelms my soul——adieu!
" adieu!"

The hopeless suicide deliberately walked across the fields to the Wye, and prepared to precipitate himself from a high bank into a deep pool which he had observed in one of his rambles. It has often been asserted that men never commit suicide but in a paroxysm of frenzy, and in the total absence of reason; but the disease of Jones was rather a perversion of intellect by the predominance of a strong passion, and he prepared himself for death with the utmost deliberation.

It was now night. The screech-owl saluted the rising morn with her ominous screams; numerous bats on the wing were the only living objects discernible to the poor suicide, who, turning his eyes and hands to heaven, ejaculated a short prayer, and plunged headlong into the river.

At this awful moment, on which, perhaps, the eternal state of an immortal spirit depended, a man of resolution and philanthrophy was nigh. Farmer Sotheran, who had rambled along the woody bank of the Wye, was at a small distance when Jones committed the rash act; he ran forward, and just as the

suicide was sinking for the last time into the arms of death, the intrepid rambler precipitated himself into the river to his rescue, dived to the bottom, caught the victim of love, and being an excellent swimmer brought the lifeless body to the bank. He then hastened to the village and collected a number of young men, who carried the apparently lifeless body to an adjacent farm-house, when Mr. Sotheran, by the successful application of the means recommended by medical practitioners for the recovery of drowned persons, in a few minutes restored Jones to life.

With

With sensibility the reason of the unhappy suicide was also restored, and the first object that met his view was the benignant Sotheran busily engaged in promoting his recovery. The recent transaction appeared to him as a painful dream; he fell into a sound repose, and this favourable symptom removed every doubt of his resuscitation. Mr. Sotheran rewarded the young men who carried Jones from the river, with a crown a-piece, and leaving his patient to the care of the farmer, he returned home with secret satisfaction and gratitude to Providence for having made him instrumental to the preservation of a fellow-creature.

Meanwhile the letter received by Lucinda from the suicide, excited a strong emotion of grief and terror in her gentle bosom. She thought it her duty to alarm Mr. Jones's friends, and, if possible, prevent any act of desperation. Accompanied by her eldest sister, she hastened on the wings of fear to farmer Willoughby's, and gave the alarm. Mr. Jones's apartment was searched, but he was not there. The farmer's servants were dispatched in all directions in quest of the unhappy young man, and they soon returned with intelligence that he had been taken out of the river by Mr. Sotheran, and then lay out of danger at the house of farmer Hurst.

Hurst. A female servant was then sent to attend him, and the two Miss Willoughbys, with that endearing sympathy which renders women so inestimable, resolved to forego the benefit of a sound repose, and accompanied the servant to attend on their amiable and unfortunate cousin.

Lucinda and her sister returned home with diminished anxiety when they found that Mr. Jones was out of danger.

This event was an interesting topic at all the tea-tables in Norton; nay, even the rustics over their glass of ale expatiated on the absurdity of

self-murder; every instance that could be recollected to have happened in that part of the country was repeated, and among others, the following were dwelt upon as particularly curious:

Mary Comerford, of the parish of Wellingborough, threw herself into a marl-pit, because Thomas Wilkins, a carter, would not marry her, after he had purchased the ring, and had the banns published.

Farmer Crab, because the price of cider declined in consequence of an abundant crop of fruit.

Henry

Henry Sheepskin, attorney-at-law, because he was unsuccessfully prosecuted by a client whom he attempted to cheat, in a fit of despair shot himself.

William Wiseacre, sheriff, who hanged himself, because two bailiffs, who were his partners in trade, were convicted of perjury, in which Mr. Sheriff himself was also implicated.

These instances of insanity, together with those of at least a dozen of young maidens who hung themselves in their garters, or poisoned or drowned themselves for love, afforded much amusement to the vil-

lagers, but Mr. Jones's recent attempt was a still greater fund of entertainment; men, women, and children thronged to the bank from which he plunged into the liquid element, and while the women looked down the precipice with horror, the young men facetiously denominated the spot "the Lover's Leap," where they humourously invited each other to terminate their woes, if despised by the object of their affection.

The gossips of Norton had now a favourable opportunity to lavish their censure on the innocent cause of the suicide, and the moral character of Lucinda underwent a severe

vere and unmerited condemnation. "What an ill-natured minx she must be to refuse such a handsome man as Mr. Jones," said dame Gibson. "Why her heart must be as hard as flint, and yet she looks as innocent as a babe; for my part, I never liked those sly, demure girls, who are so distant and so modest, as it is called, when, perhaps, pride and not modesty is the cause of their being so coy." "Very true, mistress," replied dame Gobseberry, "I always thought Lucinda Greenhill a designing gipsy, and so she has proved. I warrant she tempted the poor young man on step by step, till, like Will-o'-th'-wisp, she led him to the brink of the Wye,

and then left him to sink or swim." "If I had such a daughter," cried another gossip, "I'd break every bone in her skin for treating an honest-hearted young fellow so cruelly. I don't know where she can expect to go when she dies, after thus committing murder, for what is it better. I suppose she has set her cap at that queer fellow farmer Sotheran.

Thus did the ill-natured vent their malice against the virtuous and unassuming young woman, whose meritorious conduct excited their envy. Had she associated with the scandalous sisterhood, and participated in their views of malice and de-

defamation, they would have been unanimous in their approbation; but she avoided such society, and preserved her unblemished purity of principles and conduct by obedience to the dictates of virtue.

An event, consequent to the recent incident, proved a severe trial to the discretion of Lucinda. Mr. Sotheran, from his eagerness to preserve the life of Jones, had forgot or neglected to change his clothes after he came out of the river. A severe cold, followed by a dangerous fever, seized this benevolent man, and confined him to his chamber for a month.

During the progress of his disease the solicitude of his neighbours was remarkable. The laborious villagers called at farmer Grenhill's every evening after they had done their work, with anxious enquiries respecting the instructor of their children; they dreaded the loss of a man who had already done so much, and from whose philanthropy, they expected still greater favours, and gratitude as well as self-love contributed to their affectionate regard, and prompted their prayers to heaven for his recovery.

Nor was the family where he lodged deficient in their assiduities. A physician from Ross visited the

patient daily. The farmer's wife and daughters attended him with all the officiousness of good nature, though not without apprehension, as the fever was contagious.

Lucinda alone braved the danger of infection, and watched over the patient witha lover's tenderness, and care. His medicines were administered by her hand, and though an old female servant performed the inferior offices of attendance, yet Lucinda suffered all the anxiety and fatigue of an affectionate friend and a careful nurse.

As the fever in its progress became more dangerous, the fears of Lucinda

Lucinda increased. How often did the tender tears of love drop from her eyes as she bent over Sotheran, and besprinkle his face, while she wiped the feverish exudation from his brow! How often did her heart palpitate with apprehension and sorrow as the groans of the slumbering patient indicated his pain! With what angelic sweetness did she smile as she held the medicated mixture to his lips, and consoled him with hope in the tones of tenderness! Sotheran was not insensible of the value of these attentions, and when out of danger and capable of reflection, he could not contemplate the magnanimity of the village maid without admiration.

"How

" How great," cried he, " has been the sacrifice which she has made to friendship; how numerous her privations! she has denied herself refection and repose for my sake, and can I too highly esteem such goodness! She has despised the danger of contagion, and the sneers of ignorance, and devoted her character and her health to the service of her friend! Where can we find an instance of equal generosity? Had my unhappy spouse been such, earth would have been a paradise, but I must bear my misfortune with fortitude, and render grateful adoration to Providence for my restoration to health."

The gradual, though slow return of health, promised to restore him to his rural pursuits. In a week he was able to return to the parlour which was fitted up for his reception by the attentive Lucinda. On his entrance he was received with the warm and undissembled congratulations of the farmer and his family; but the bosom of Lucinda panted with joy. "He is now out of danger, thank heaven!" she whispered as she bounded along the walks of her father's garden. "He is safe and I am blest."

When the news that farmer Sotheran was out of danger was announced

announced to the villagers, they testified their joy by keeping a holiday on the occasion. The bells rung during the morning of the day set apart for this jubilee. The village youths and maids in their holiday cloaths, walked two and two to congratulate their friend. They were preceded by the children of the free school, who proceeded in regular order with a band of music and two flags, with the inscriptions" "Praise to the Father of Light for sending a friendly instructor among us." "Long live our benefactor."

This happy train proceeded to Farmer Greenhill's, who had provided

vided an entertainment for the occasion. The weather was fine, the cheering radiance of an autumnal noon illumined the clear blue sky, and shone on the landscape, which presented all the varieties of light and shade so delightful to the imagination. The approach of the villagers was announced by their music; the garden gates were thrown open; and the train passed before their friend, who stood at an open window to salute them. On their arrival at a bowling green, in the centre of the garden, the rustics halted and expressed their joy by three cheers. They then danced on the green to the music of the violin, clarionet

clarionet and hautboy, and the heart of Mr. Sotheran was so much affected by this proof of their affection, that the tears of sensibility imperceptibly stole down his cheeks.

Lucinda, who secretly observed his emotion, viewed those precious drops as the offspring of a good heart, and sympathized with the object of her love. She afterwards, accompanied by her sisters, went to pay her respects to the young women, and the whole party to the number of two hundred dined in the farmer's barn.

Thither Mr. Sotheran went, leaning

leaning on his faithful servant Patrick Kelly. The whole company rose on his entrance, and received his acknowledgements with eyes sparkling with joy. The paleness of his countenance evinced how near he had been to the gates of death; and in a few minutes he retired amid the respectful looks and good wishes of his honest friends. As for Kelly he was so enraptured on this occasion, that in the afternoon, when the young people returned to dance on the green, he amused them with a hornpipe in the true Irish style.

The lively party continued their country

country dances till sunset, when they retired with the same regularity with which they came. This cheerful scene, while it contributed to the amusement of Mr. Sotheran, was an additional proof, that the human heart, unless vitiated by evil example, is warm, grateful and good. "These innocent rustics are happy" said he, "and I shall contribute my mite to establish that happiness by the inculcation of sound morality and useful knowledge." Such were his cogitations on his pillow, and refreshing repose was the reward of these virtuous resolutions.

To

To prevent the wearisomeness of leisure, Mr. Sotheran had recourse to those inexhaustible sources of entertainment, his books. Nor was he more a niggard of his volumes than his purse, for he contributed to the amusement of the farmer's daughters, by reading while they pursued their needlework; and they in return gave diversity by their agreeable chit chat, and sometimes a song. The charming old song, beginning,

"Sweet are the charms of her I love,"

which was a favourite of Mr. Sotheran's, was sung with affecting simplicity by Lucinda. One evening

ing as she sat beside him, and with a voice uttered by tenderness sung the following stanzas,

"Devouring Time with stealing pace
Makes lofty oak and cedars bow,
And marble walls and gates of brass
In his rude march he levels low;
But Time, destroying far and wide,
Love from the soul can ne'er divide.

Death only with his cruel dart
The gentle Godhead can remove,
And tear him from the bleeding heart
To mingle with the blest above;
There join'd to all his kindred train,
He finds a lasting rest from pain."

Sotheran was enchanted, and deeply sighing, he pressed the hand of the melodist. She turned upon him her angelic eyes, languishing with

with love, and from that moment his heart became her willing votary. The blushing Lucinda could not conceal her satisfaction on the discovery of his mutual attachment, and from the respectful as well as delicate manner in which he made a declaration of his love, her heart told her that it was genuine. She did not foresee the numerous obstacles to their union, nor the dangers arising from the cruel hatred of an abandoned woman enfuriated by revenge.

CHAP-

CHAPTER V.

Another instance of Mr. Sotheran's beneficence—Memoirs of an Author.

During a short excursion in the neighbourhood of Norton-Goodrich, Mr. Sotheran stopped at a small inn, for refreshment. The landlady, who was acquainted with the benevolence of her guest's disposition, on presenting him with a glass of negus, curtsied, and requested him to visit a sick man then in their house. "He came hither about a fortnight since, Sir," said she, "accompanied by

his wife and their little son, and the day after his arrival he was seized with what our doctor calls a nervous fever, which has confined him to his room ever since. I'm afraid, poor man, he is very low in the world, for I heard his wife whisper to him, as he enquired whether she had paid for a week's lodging, that she had changed their last half guinea. Doctor Williams has attended him with great care, and says he is a very poor gentleman."

Mr. Sotheran required no persuasions to induce him to visit a destitute stranger; he sent up the landlady with his compliments, and

and a request that he might be admitted. In a few minutes he was conducted into a back room on the first floor, where the patient lay, pale, emaciated, and tranquil. Near him sat a modest looking young woman, who arose on the entrance of their visitor; she held a boy about two years old in her arms, who smiled with the playful innocence of childhood on all around, unconscious of the sorrows of his parents.

"My motive for this visit" said Mr. Sotheran, "is not idle curiosity; a stranger languishing in sickness at an inn, is entitled to the attention of every man of

feeling; and whatever I can do to render your situation more comfortable, shall be done." The stranger's eyes brightened, a glow of surprize and pleasure overspread his countenance for a moment, and he thanked his unknown friend for his proffered services, with a dignity of sentiment that commanded his respect.

A light and nourishing dinner was prepared by the directions of Mr. Sotheran, who dined with this unfortunate family; and enjoyed more satisfaction in their company, than he ever had experienced at the festive board of opulence.

In

In the evening he left the stranger much comforted by his assurance of protection; and he put two guineas into the hands of his hostess, with orders that the sick man and his family should receive every proper accommodation till his return.

Mr. Sotheran repeated his visit at the expiration of a week, and found the stranger much better. He had walked out, once or twice, during the interval; and health and serenity again animated an aspect at once interesting and pleasing.

In the course of their conversation, Mr. Sotheran hinted a desire to know his history. Mr. Norman, in reply, told his friend, that as he had been in the habit of writing, he should present him with a narrative of his life; adding at the same time, in a tone of candour, " I apprehend, Sir, that you will rather be offended with the egotism of an obscure individual, than gratified by an account of common incidents. The events in the life of an author, though sometimes multifarious, are seldom considered of much consequence by the majority of mankind; to a few individuals they are doubtless amusing

ing, if not instructive." "A circumstantial detail of the events of your life," replied Mr. Sotheran, "will afford me particular gratification; for I love literature, and respect men of letters; and however imprudent the unfortunate among them may have been, I can pity their frailties and admire their genius. Therefore whether you have been a prudent or an imprudent author, Mr. Norman, let me have your history with its original imperfections and merits: In the mean time I insist on being your treasurer, till your situation is more comfortable." With these words Mr. Sotheran put a purse, containing ten guineas,

into the hand of Mr. Norman's infant son, who bounded with playful activity on its mother's lap. He then hastily left the room.

In the course of two days, Mr. Norman completed his narrative, which he sent to his benefactor. On receiving the manuscript, Mr. Sotheran retired to his study, and amused his curiosity with the

MEMOIRS OF AN AUTHOR.

"I was born in a village near the sea shore, on the eastern coast of an island, the inhabitants of which have, for ages been misrepresented, by the ignorance and prejudice of neighbouring nations.

My

My parentage was obscure; but I had the good fortune to be nourished at the breast of a young and healthy mother, an advantage seldom enjoyed by the children of the opulent.

"The event of my juvenile years, like those of most children, were generally uninteresting; but I cannot forget the tenderness of maternal affection. To the solicitous attention of an excellent mother, am I indebted for the elements of knowledge, which I learnt from that important volume the primer; and I recollect with pleasure, the gratification which I received from the numerous wood cuts with which it was embellished: nay

the red cover was as highly valued by me as the most expensive bindings are by the collectors of books who keep them more for ornament than use.

"My father, who was a strict Presbyterian, and esteemed a man of unimpeachable integrity, was employed as superintendant at an extensive bleach-green; and as his salary was liberal, he was enabled to supply his family with every requisite of food and cloathing which temperance and decency demanded.

Soon after the period of my infancy, I was sent to school at a village

village about two miles from my father's house, and in this rural seminary the powers of my mind gradually unfolded themselves. I was instructed in reading, writing, arithmetic, and book-keeping, by an intelligent schoolmaster; a man of pleasing aspect, low stature, and an irritable disposition. I was rather a favourite with this rustic pedagogue, which often prevented my participation in the stripes which he bestowed most liberally on the other boys, with little discrimination or propriety: But I could always complete my task in less than half the time required, and in my thirteenth year I had

completely exhausted my instructor's stock of knowledge.

"In the interim I had devoted my leisure hours to the study of those celebrated histories, The Seven Champions, Don Bellanis of Greece, Montelion, Knight of the Oracle, and similar works of imagination Poetry also shared my admiration, and many a time have I felt strong delight in hearing my mother's maid-servants chant the rural ditties produced by some amorous swain.

"By the advice of my instructor, my father consented that I should repeat my arithmetical studies, which

which engaged my attention during my fourteenth year. During my morning walk to school, a variety of striking objects presented themselves. In spring, the lofty mountains on each side of a valley through which part of the road was made, presented their smiling verdure, on which a number of colts, young cattle, sheep, and goats found pasturage, while the choristers of nature chanted their notes of amatory melody in the hazle thickets, and on the solitary hawthorn which appeared on the irregular and airy steep from which several streams issued, sparkling and murmuring in the valley. On reaching the extremity of this vale, the

the country gradually declined to a fertile plain, interspersed with farm-houses and cottages, and the wavy expanse of the sea, with ships on various tacks, either coming into the port of Dundalk, or outward bound, appeared in majestic simplicity. Such were the scenes on which I often gazed with mute contemplation, while ardent curiosity to explore the watery expanse, and survey distant regions of the globe, inspired my mind. I sometimes indulged the vagaries of fancy by supposing myself seated in one of the lofty clouds which floated in air far above my head, and thence surveying the ocean, the earth, rivers, woods,

towns

towns and cities, and those whimsical mental excursions invigorated my imagination.

"My youthful companions to and from school, were my sister, and ten or twelve boys, mostly younger than myself. One of these boys was both my school-fellow and playmate, and had engaged my friendship by his good-nature and cheerfulness. If he was insulted, I was the person to whom he applied for redress, and on some occasions I ran the risk of a drubbing by espousing his cause. The quarrels of schoolboys, however, are only interesting to themselves, they are momentary, and totally forgotten

forgotten in the ensuing night's sound repose. Happy would it be for mankind, if in maturer years we could with equal facility forget our injuries and conquer our evil passions; villainous statesmen would not then be able to involve whole nations in the miseries of war and devastation to gratify their own ambition and avarice.

"The numerous trivial incidents of juvenility are unworthy to be mentioned, but one instance, which had nearly proved fatal, will demonstrate the force of friendship even in our early years.

Our

"Our little party commonly rushed out of the school door every afternoon with all the vivacity of lively spirits, active limbs, and minds at liberty, and we commonly ran as least a quarter of a mile without intermission. When out of breath, we stopped and proceeded home together at a more moderate pace. About half way we daily crossed a mountain-stream, which in fine weather flowed over the sand and pebbles with pleasing murmurs, but after heavy rains, this rivulet suddenly swelled into a raging flood which had carried away several bridges in its progress, and among the rest, that which

which had crossed it at the road by which we passed.

"After a morning of violent rain in the latter part of autumn, we proceeded home as usual, but on ascending a hill we beheld the whole sandy channel of the brook, covered to a considerable extent with a muddy flood, which roared in a torrent down the mountain side, rolling large stones over one another with a tremendous rumbling.

"We stopped at the verge of the flood, and as the place where the road crossed it was the most fordable, I resolved to wade through. I tried

I tried and succeeded, not without difficulty, as I was almost borne away by the force of the current, but I stepped with firmness and caution, and kept my eyes stedfastly fixed on the opposite bank to prevent giddiness. I then encouraged my companions to wade through one at a time, and to keep their eyes on me; they all were successful except my friend, who was the youngest and came last. He waded with evident apprehension till he reached the middle of the flood, where his fortitude totally failed, and he stood still looking downward with helpless terror into the eddies of the current. In vain I called to him to look

on

on me, in a moment he grew giddy, fell, and was carried away by the rapidity of the flood; obedient to the impulse of my feelings, I went a few paces back, and giving a shout, I took a running leap as far as I could into the current, and happily seized my drowning companion. At this moment, on which the lives of two human beings depended, a giddiness seized my brain, and as I strove to hold up the youth, every object seemed moving round with velocity. I still had presence of mind to look towards the land, and soon revived, and triumphantly supported my companion to the bank. He vomited a considerable

quantity

quantity of water, after which I supported him to his mother's door.

"O sympathy! thou most delightful and mysterious of all human emotions, how rich is thy reward to the feeling heart! At this moment I beheld the eyes of that grateful mother, raised in pious rapture to heaven; I see her embrace her only son, restored from the devouring elements to her arms; and I feel the pressure of kisses, mingled with tears of joy, which she bestewed on the preserver of her boy! Is there a luxury on earth equal to the delight of having been instrumental

instrumental to the preservation of a fellow creature? No, ye destroyers of men! Ye cowardly and malignant statesmen, who sit behind your desks, and with cold blooded villainy calculate on the destruction of thousands of men who never injured you; men in the flower of their years, the ornament and strength of their country; you can never experience a gratification in all your conquests equal to his who has re-opened the eye closed by the hand of death, and restored to his joyful friends the victim of accident.

"In the fifteenth year of my age I was taken from school, and instructed

instructed by my industrious father in the art of bleaching linen. But nature never intended me for chemical pursuits; the study of her open volume was my favourite object; and the landscape around my residence was well adapted to the improvement of my imagination.

"My father's dwelling was on the summit of a hill; a clear and rapid river pursued its course through the subjacent valley to the sea, about a mile distant; the town of Dundalk appeared at the distance of three miles, adorned with the lofty spire of its church, and the prospect enlivened by a

view of the port with vessels at anchor, or gliding over the glittering expanse. The interjacent country was beautifully diversified with cultivated hills, dales and plains well enclosed and echoing with the cheerful sounds of population. The back ground was sufficiently bold, consisting of a succession of mountains, down the sides of which flowed several pure streams. They extended to the distance of ten miles from the town of Newry to Caxlingford, where they terminated in a promontory. Often have I beheld the golden eagle hovering over their summits, while flights of starlings, and larks fled from the destructive

destructive beak and talons of the aerial tyrant.

"Such were the scenes of my youth; and often, seated on the thyme-scented summit of a mountain, I have rested after the fatigue of climbing, and feasting my eyes with an extensive prospect of several miles, I have tuned my votive lay to nature.

"Amid those peaceful and elevated regions I in early youth composed the following verses on Solitude, which my youthful vanity dignified with the name of an Ode; but since my taste has been improved, I am now inclined to

place it among the lower class of lyric compositions, and to denominate it the lesser Ode indeed. As it is, however, the genuine effusion of an inexperienced mind, its simplicity may please, notwithstanding its defects.

ODE

ODE TO SOLITUDE.

Thou mountain nymph, sweet Solitude,
O! lead me to thy secret cell,
When no unhallow'd cares intrude,
But Peace and Virtue ever dwell.

The cavern'd rock with moss o'ergrown,
And crown'd with ivy's lasting hue,
Thou chusest for thy lofty throne;
Thy canopy, heav'n's concave blue.

O! place me gently by thy side
Whilst the rich landscape blooms below,
And o'er our heads in Nature's pride
Swells Nature's bright magnific bow.

While downward on the sunny plain,
And fertile hills and vales I gaze,
Where Beauty, Love, and Pleasure reign,
And man rejoicing spends his days,

Imprint this precept on my heart;
All temporal delights are vain;
The labour'd elegance of art,
And all the treasuries of gain.

With Contemplation let me range
Vast Nature's variegated maze,
And view with rapture every change,
And give to Nature's author praise.

The glens and rocks shall hear me sing,
Their echoes to my voice reply,
Whilst I adore Creation's King,
Whose wisdom form'd the earth and sky.

In

"In my seventeenth year I first experienced the hopes and fears, the joys and sorrows of love. The object of this attachment was Anna, the second daughter of James Reynolds, a farmer who cultivated the western side of the mountain to the extent of several acres, and fertilized a spot that had hitherto been neglected. His farm was a striking ornament to the landscape; and contrasted with 'the blossom'd furze unprofitably gay', and the purple bloom of the equally unfruitful heath, his verdant corn fields and pastures in the spring, and the splendour of his golden grain reflecting the light of autumnal suns, were beau-

tiful. This scene often invited me to climb, with the activity of youth, to the farmer's neat mansion, where I was sure of a friendly welcome. The innocent hilarity of the farmer, his jests, for he was jocose, and his songs prompted by the cheerfulness of health, often excited my laughter, in which I was joined by the rest of the family.

Two sons and four daughters blest the union of the farmer and his industrious wife. I gradually contracted a friendship with the eldest son, who had been my schoolfellow, and to this intimacy am I indebted for my skill in horsemanship

manship, which I acquired by riding on colts on the adjacent mountains, at the risk of my life.

" Our friendship was still more strongly cemented by our being fellow-soldiers. The enthusiasm of the Irish volunteers was now at the height, and we enrolled ourselves members to a corps belonging to my native village. The use of arms now became my favourite amusement; and by practice I soon obtained a dexterity in the use of the firelock unknown to my comrades, in consequence of which I was promoted to the enviable office, as I then thought it, of being flugelman to the corps.

"With what ardour and attention did I devote my whole thoughts to military manœuvres, and with the quickness of electricity perform the different motions with the firelock to the flam of the drums! with what exultation did I hear my attention and activity praised by my officers and the spectators!

"Ambition is natural to the human mind, and a desire to excel, seems implanted in our nature, doubtless for the wisest purpose, to promote our progress in the attainment of knowledge, and the consequent enjoyment of happiness. But by a fatal perversion of

of our powers we direct our attention to acquisitions rather pernicious than useful to ourselves and society. It may be requisite that men should feel a desire to repel aggression, and thus defend their country; but this is too apt to degenerate into a desire of conquest, by which we become invaders of the possessions of others. There seems a strong propensity in the heart of men, to the acquisition of military glory, and, under proper restraints, it may be the defence of the nation; *but let it never degenerate into the malignant and ferocious spirit of the savage intent on the destruction of a fellow crea-*

ture, because he is the inhabitant of a rival nation.

"Courage in arms, and ever prompt to show
His manly forehead to the fiercest foe,
Guards well what arts and industry has won,
And freedom claims him for her first-born son."

"Such were the principles which actuated the Irish Volunteers in 1780, when the combined fleet of France and Spain carried defiance into St. George's Channel, and when the folly and wickedness of a corrupt administration, intent on the subjugation of the United States of America, sent our soldiers to be sacrificed on the transatlantic shores, and left these islands to the defence of their brave inhabitants.

"With

"With the ardour of a youthful soldier, I also became an admirer of the trappings of the military habit. The waving plume, the superfine ruffle, the gorgeous embroidery, and the succinct uniform, transformed me from a plain clown into a smart young fellow; and if I appeared a splendid object in my own estimation, I was no less attractive to our village nymphs. There seems a strong predilection between Venus and Mars, and Dryden's sentiment, that

"None but the brave deserve the fair,"

seems in unison with every female bosom. Whether women,

conscious of their want of protection, naturally cling to those who appear best provided for their defence, or the irresistible power of finery over the female imagination, inclines them to become enamoured of " the smart shoulder-knot and gay cockade;" or both these causes combined, captivate the feminine gender, certain it is, that every foolish lisping Miss is enraptured with the idea of becoming an officer's lady, and every simpering chamber-maid hopes to " marry a soldier and carry his wallet."

" As a volunteer, I shared all the pleasures without any of the perils

perils of war; and neither the glitter of arms, nor the vanity of youth, had estranged me from my studies. At intervals of leisure I read whatever books chance threw into my way. Waller's Poems afforded me much pleasure; I admired the wit and gallantry of his melodious amatory effusions, and improved in my complimentary expressions to the fair with the instructions of such a master.

"Still my heart was free, and the beauties of nature occupied my imagination. The fresh and delicate bloom of the fields in spring brightening into verdure; the graceful foliage of the trees, unfold-

unfolding from the buds; the harmony of the birds, the fragrance of new blown flowers, and the cooling freshness of the western breeze, imparted innocent delight to my mind. Nor were the nobler scenes of autumn less delectable. The ripened grain cut down by the active reapers, and carried home to the barn; the orchards bending with their plenteous, fragrant and delicious fruits; the serene lustre of the setting sun, gilding with his golden rays the azure heavens, and the benignant light of the full-orbed harvest moon, affording her friendly aid to the industrious husbandmen, filled my heart with that gratitude

and joy which spontaneously arises from the prospect of plenty.

"But the moment was come when the imperial sway of female beauty was paramount in my heart. One fine summer's evening as I returned from parade, I visited farmer Reynolds and his family. I walked into the garden accompanied by Anna, and while I amused myself with reflections on the beautiful diversity of the flowery tribes, my lively companion strung a number of roses into a wreah with which she encircled my military cap, saying "It is very beautiful." The look of mingled gaiety, and love, and the sweet-

sweetness of her voice as she placed her present on my brow, are yet strong in my remembrance. I clasped her in my arms, and impressed a kiss on her lips, while the vermeil blush of virgin modesty illumined her aspect. Such was the commencement of love in a heart which from this moment till a fatal period was devoted to Anna.

"A detail of the little incidents of love would be tedious, for circumstances of little consequence to others are invaluable to lovers. Our attachment grew stronger as we advanced in life, for three years it was our chief source of happiness. Every object

object around the dwelling of Anna appeared more beautiful to my fancy, and as I daily turned my eyes towards the mountainous region which she inhabited, I panted for the hour when my toil should be succeeded by the customary evening walk with my innocent and tender companion. In her presence I never knew sorrow till the moment of our separation.

"But the fatal period arrived which terminated our connection for ever. In my twentieth year, my father obtained an employment of considerable importance and emolument for me. It was at a distant

distant part of the island—I heard the news with an intermixture of pleasure and pain. The consequence attached to a place of trust was grateful to my vanity; but a removal from my native village, the pleasing intercourse with my sisters and other youthful companions; a mother whom I almost idolized, a father whom I venerated, and my Anna, the first object of my youthful love, excited the most poignant emotions of grief. The business, however, admitted of no delay; and I ascended the mountain side for the last time to bid adieu to Anna.

"I found

"I found my dear girl sitting in company with her eldest sister, and employed at needle-work. With a faltering voice and down-cast eyes, I communicated the intelligence of my promotion, and the object of my visit. "Then we shall see you but seldom", said Elinor. I raised my eyes and beheld the tears of friendship trickling down her cheeks—I ventured a glance at Anna, who was speechless; but her audible sobs convinced me of her affliction. We parted with mutual expressions of unutterable love, and I never more beheld her.

"In

"In less than half a year after my departure from Ravensdale, I received a last letter from Anna, the purport of which was, that her father had sold his farm, and embarked with his family in a vessel for New York. That letter was written on board the Columbia, which was just ready to sail, so that my Anna was out of sight of her native isle before the tidings reached me. My sorrow for several weeks interrupted my repose, and my dreams were filled with imaginary interviews with my love. At length I consoled myself with a determination to emigrate to America as soon as I should acquire a sufficient property.

ty, and to unite my fate with that of my beloved mistress.

"About a year afterwards, a letter from a friend communicated the news of Anna's death. Thus were all my projects of felicity blasted—I was seized with an habitual dejection which threatened my life, but youth prevailed over grief, and on my recovering, I bade adieu to my parents, and sailed for England.

"On my arrival in Liverpool I endeavoured to obtain employment as Merchant's clerk, but a stranger without friends has no chance of success in England; I rambled

I rambled about while my money lasted, and afterwards had recourse to manual labour for subsistence. This was no degradation, and though at first offensive to my vanity, yet custom soon reconciled me to my situation.

" I passed nearly two years of my existence at Lleweney in the vale of Clowyd, in Denbighshire, North Wales, where the Honorable Thomas Fitzmaurice had established extensive bleach-works; and as the workmen were unemployed more than half their time, I spent the intervals of leisure in the acquisition of knowledge. In this pursuit I was assisted

sisted by the liberality of Mr. Griffith, a schoolmaster, who had formerly been steward to a nobleman, and acquired a valuable library, to which I had access.

Thus the two years spent in the obscurity of a Welch vale, by studious application, revived and cherished my love of literature. Venus no longer interrupted my studies, the Muses engrossed all my thoughts. Not that my heart was invulnerable, or cold to the influence of female beauty; the man who has once felt the ennobling influence of love must ever cherish a sentiment of kindness for the amiable sex, and I seldom beheld a beautiful

beautiful girl without breathing a sigh to the memory of Anna.

I sometimes improved my imagination by a solitary excursion on the mountains which formed the magnificent boundary of the vale of Clwyd; and the toil of climbing was repaid by the magnificence of the prospect, which exhibited the diversity of barren mountains, woody hills, fertile vallies, towns, villages, farm-houses and cottages, and a distant view of the Irish Sea, with the indistinct appearance of ships on its expanse. These images exercised my poetic powers, and I wrote a short poem descriptive of Lleweney

Lleweney Bleach-works, which I presented to Mr. Fitzmaurice.

"Two days afterwards he sent for me. I was ushered into a parlour, where he sat alone at breakfast. On my entrance he arose and said, "I have read your poem, I think it a very fine one, and I think your are an extraordinary man." Here," added he, stepping to a desk and handing me a volume, "here is a book which I make you a present of. This present he accompanied by another, which was literally a purse of gold, for he was truly munificent, and notwithstanding some eccentricities in his behaviour, he was an estimable character.

My vanity was now exalted to a high pitch; copies of my poem I was afterwards informed, were sent to some of Mr. Fitzmaurice's friends, particularly Mr. Pennant of Downing, the topographer and tourist; and I actually considered myself as a very great poet indeed, a favourite of the Muses, and under the happy influence of their immediate inspiration. Pleasing illusion, which experience and taste have since destroyed! In this instance I experienced the truth of Gray's paradoxical assertion,

"Where ignorance is bliss
'Tis folly to be wise."

As

"As the production of a laborious rustic, and in that light I doubtless was viewed by my partial employer, the piece was entitled to some commendation; its principal merit, however, consisted in its giving a tolerable image of the subject.

"As my mind improved, my curiosity became more vigorous; I often gazed upon the Welch mountains, exclaiming "When I pass your heights I shall be within two hundred miles of London!"

"In the spring of 1789 I set out on my journey to London, and as I travelled on foot I had an opportunity of observing the different towns

through which I passed, and their inhabitants. At length I arrived in sight of the English metropolis, a city so justly celebrated, and which I had long ardently desired to see. It was a fine morning in the month of May, and when I came in view of the capital from Highgate-hill my mind was filled with sublime emotions.

"I descended the hill with all the eagerness of curiosity, and passing through several streets I at length stopped at a barber's shop where I was shaved. I afterwards obtained the comfortable refreshment of a good dinner at an adjacent eating-house, and again sallying forth into

the street with an accession of animal spirits; I enquired the way to Westminster Abbey.

"A genteel man gave me a very accurate direction. 'You must go past that church,' said he, pointing to St. Paul's, the noble cupola of which had attracted my attention, 'and pass along without turning to the right hand or to the left, for about a mile and a half, till you come to the statue of a man on horseback; you must then turn to the left and pass Whitehall and the Horse-guard barrack, and then any one will shew you the Abbey.' I thanked him, saying to myself as I proceeded rapidly along, 'Things

must be on a large scale in London when a man can walk through the streets for a mile and a half in a right line.'

"I gave a glance at the noble edifice of St. Paul's as I passed it, but I did not turn to admire its most magnificent west front, which afterwards afforded me so much pleasure; for my mind was so intent on examining the repository of the illustrious dead, that I hurried forward and reached the Abbey, the outer doors of which I found open. I entered, and in a few minutes found myself in the Poet's Corner.

"To

"To describe my feelings would be impossible. A mingled emotion of awe, sensibility and pleasure, overwhelmed my mind. I gazed with rapture on the bust of Milton, and the statue of Shakespeare. As I stood before the figure of the Avonian bard I read the inscription on the scroll—I paused at the conclusion, and casting my eyes on the tombstone beneath my feet, I found it inscribed with the name of Dr. Samuel Johnson. I felt as if I were electrified, and the tears of enthusiasm started from my eyes!

"I left the Abbey with a mind elevated and gratified, and in the evening obtained lodgings at a pub-

lic house, in Hart-street, Cripplegate. A week soon passed away, during which I daily rambled through the town, the curiosities of which appeared to me inexhaustible; but my purse was not like that of Fortunatus, and my pleasures ebbed as my pecuniary resources diminished.

"I now began to think of an employment, but I was yet too diffident to imagine that my literary productions could excite any attention in London. I therefore left the city with a sigh of regret, and passing over London Bridge I went to Carshalton in Surrey, where I obtained immediate employment at the linen business.

At

"At this pleasant village I continued four years in a state of healthful serenity, and engaged in an occupation which furnished me with the means of a comfortable subsistence, besides a surplus of about twenty guineas a year, which I sent to my parents in Ireland. My affection for them was unabated by absence, and in 1793 I resolved to revisit them.

"Accordingly I set out from Carshalton in April, and passing through several of the midland and northern counties of England, I proceeded through part of Scotland along the western road to Port Patrick, and

sailed in the packet for Donaghadee, in Ireland.

"On landing I proceeded with alacrity homeward, and arrived at my father's house about twilight.—Let those parents who love their children, and those children who venerate and love their parents, conceive our inexpressible joy on meeting, after an absence of six years!—I shall not attempt to describe it.

I was now at home, with an active body and mind unemployed, and as I had taken some pains to improve my mental powers while in England and Wales, I resolved to profit by my attainments. For this purpose

purpose I offered myself as private tutor to the children of two country gentlemen, who were near neighbours in the vicinity of Newry, a sea-port town in the North of Ireland. I was engaged at a small salary, and continued in this employment one year, at the expiration of which, a cousin, who was an accountant in Newry, obtained a place for me in the counting-house of a respectable merchant.

"In this employment I continued three years, and at intervals of leisure I wrote a number of short poems, which I published with the pompous title of 'Odes and Elegies.' Such is the natural predominance of

vanity in the human mind, that I really thought myself a great poet, and I was confirmed in this error by the patronage of the public. My poems produced me one hundred pounds: I was elated with my success, and rejecting the dull transactions of the mercantile life, I set out for Dublin on the wings of expectation.

"I had divided my golden poetic harvest with my mother, and with a well filled purse I was enabled to reside in Dublin for several months in a state of independence, during which I occasionally wrote essays for the newspapers. My pecuniary resources at length became exhausted,

hausted, and I was engaged by the editor of a newspaper, at a very moderate weekly sum. I continued to drudge as a scribbler for some months, when a friend advised me to try my fortune in London. Away I went; was landed at Liverpool, and proceeded to the capital on foot.

"On my arrival in London I could obtain no employment, and I therefore sat down to write a novel, which I completed in about a month. For the manuscript I received the liberal sum of *five guineas* from a publisher in Paternoster-row. I re-published a few of my poems, and the Reviewers too soon convinced me that I was not a poet.

poet. I therefore turned my attention to plain prose, and produced a short biographical sketch of a celebrated character, which was successful and productive. My next production was a satirical work, which was still more beneficial.

"A variety of small tracts from my pen appeared in succession, and amused the public, but were not of any lasting advantage to the author. I was therefore still floating unsettled on the stream of life; and amid a crowded and happy population I was in a state of comparative solitude, being unmarried.

"Desirous

"Desirous to engage in some permanent business, I commenced publisher, without any stock except ideas, and they will not pay bills. For the purpose of obtaining money to satisfy my creditors, I travelled to the provincial towns, and disposed of my books. In the course of my rambles I became acquainted with my present wife, I loved and married her. This increased my expenditure, while my income decreased, and eventually left us in that state of indigence in which you found us."

CHAP-

CHAPTER VI.

An Author provided for—scruples of Dame Greenhill respecting Mr. Sotheran—A secret revealed to a friend—two love-letters—An assignation—two happy lovers.

THE memoirs of Mr. Norman, while they amused his friend excited a strong emotion of pity. "He shall no longer struggle with the adverse stream of Fortune," exclaimed Mr. Sotheran, "I will provide him a haven of safety, where secure from the tempests of life he may enjoy serenity."

With this determination, he proposed to Mr. Norman that he should, with his family, occupy apartments in the old farm-house, and assist as superintendant in the free-school, with a salary of fifty pounds a year. This proposal met the grateful acceptance of a man in distress, who thankfully embraced an offer which placed his family beyond the reach of want.

Accordingly two well furnished apartments were prepared for his reception, and the additional accommodations of fuel and a small garden rendered the situation of this little family very comfortable.

He

He engaged in the task of preceptor with successful assiduity, and instructed boys of a superior capacity in the rudiments of useful and elegant literature.

His conversation was an acquisition to Mr. Sotheran, who often invited him to spend the evening with him at Rose-hill cottage.

The tender officiousness of Lucinda, during Mr. Sotheran's indisposition, had not escaped the notice of her parents, but each made a different conclusion. The farmer attributed his daughter's anxiety to the sensibility of her nature; but the mother, who like the

the rest of her sex was more skilful in whatever was connected with gallantry justly ascribed Lucinda's uncommon solicitude to affection. Like a faithful guardian of her daughter's honour, this judicious mother interrogated her on the subject, and the blushes and hesitation of the amiable girl confirmed the fact. The good parent pitying the situation of her daughter's heart, forbore any harsh censures, and only expressed her disapprobation of what she called an ill-founded attachment. "My dear child," said she, "Mr. Sotheran is a stranger to us, and the mysterious secrecy which he has preserved respecting his family and connections, must, I fear,

I fear, originate in some crime or misfortune, and in either case an union with him would be imprudent. Ah! my daughter, you little know the deceptions of the world; this man may be married, or he may be a criminal who has eluded the justice of his country. If he be as virtuous as the general tenour of his conduct implies, why does he not declare openly who he is? For my part, I can never consent to your marriage with a man whose conduct is inexplicable; and I would rather follow you to your grave than your bridal, if dishonour succeeded the latter. At the same time, my dear," continued she, embracing Lucinda, who

who was in tears, "it grieves me to afflict you, but my anxiety for your happiness, and the preservation of your character, compels me to the injunction, that you will no more walk out with Mr. Sotheran, nor encourage him in his pretensions to your affection, till he has unravelled the mystery, and, like an honest man, openly proved himself sincere, by having the banns published in a regular manner." Lucinda, with querulous reluctance promised obedience. "This promise" said she, "is merely the dictate of duty, and does not proceed from any doubt of the integrity of Mr. Sotheran. If he is not virtuous there is not a true man in existence." "Very few, I am afraid,

afraid, my child," replied the mother; "recollect what you read out of a play the other evening,

"Trust not man, he is by nature false."

"Yes" rejoined Lucinda, with earnestness, "and let it also be remembered, that man was first tempted to evil by woman." "Well, well, child, I find you are a defender of the men, but though the first man was, indeed, misled by Eve, his sons have very generally retaliated on her daughters since. Not that I wish" continued she, with a smile, "to censure the whole sex; there are thousands of worthy men in old England, your partiality in their favour

favour is very natural, my dear, and I hope that, as Mr. Sotheran has been the first object of your regard, he will in the end prove himself worthy of your heart."

Mrs. Greenhill then retired, leaving her daughter in a state of incertitude which rendered her miserable. While she formed and rejected various plans for her future conduct towards Mr. Sotheran, a visit from the vivacious Miss Willoughby interrupted her reflections.

That lively female, in common with most young women, aye and old women too, was extremely

envious, and though she had inviolably preserved the secret intrusted by Lucinda, she could not rest till she discovered the favoured rival who had caused such misery to poor Jones. She had now an excellent opportunity to make the enquiry, as she was sent by the hopeless lover to request that her friend would accept his miniature, and favour him with a lock of her light brown hair, which he wished to preserve as a precious remembrance.

The dread of contagion had prevented her visits during the illness of Mr. Sotheran; but all apprehensions being now removed, she entered

entered the apartment where Lucinda sat, embraced her young friend with cordiality, and opened the business by saying, "I have been dealing for you this morning, and have brought you a pretty artificial ornament, in barter for a natural ornament in your possession, and which you can very well spare if you will."

Lucinda, after expressing her satisfaction at the meeting, desired with a smile to see this curiosity. "That you shall, my dear girl," replied the other, "on condition that you promise to gratify my curiosity." "Miss Willoughby may rely on my compliance, as far as is con-

sistent with propriety, and I'm convinced she will require nothing more." Miss Willoughby bowed her assent, and opening a small case, presented the image of the unfortunate Jones, saying in a voice of persuasion, do not refuse my poor cousin the favour of your acceptance, and let him have a few of your beautiful hairs in exchange." "But would not this compliance look like encouraging an attachment which it is not in my power to return?" "By no means, Lucinda; but I find you are too scrupulous," continued she, with an arch smile; "I must therefore have recourse to a desperate expedient, and like Sir Plume, commit the

the Rape of the Lock." With these words she dexterously clipped off a few of Lucinda's hairs, and put them in her pocket with an air of satisfaction. "And now, my dear friend," continued the sprightly girl, "do gratify my curiosity, and tell me who is the favoured swain who pre-engaged that amiable heart so much coveted by my love sick coz?" Lucinda blushed, the request was unexpected, she hesitated, and for a moment resolved that the object of her love should remain a secret even from her friend, and she felt a degree of painful regret that her attachment had been discovered even by her mother.

But when she gazed on that female friend, who had been the playmate of her infant years, her school-fellow, and the depositary of all her little secrets, the voice of affection prevailed over that of prudence, and throwing her arms around Miss Willoughby's neck, and hiding her blushing face in the bosom that tenderly esteemed her, she whispered the name of Sotheran.

Her friend appeared thunder-struck, and beheld her with mute astonishment for a moment; but when her tongue received its usual volubility, she expressed her surprise, and hinted her disapprobation.

"Well,

"Well, Lucinda," said she, "I should never have guessed the object of your love, and I can hardly believe my own ears. Mr. Sotheran may have many accomplishments to which I am a stranger: in common with my neighbours, I acknowledge his charity, and the zeal with which he contributes to the comfort of the poor and industrious villagers; but my dear friend, he is more than double your age, he is a stranger, and you may, for aught we know, be cherishing a viper in your bosom. Not that I would wish to give you pain, my dear. I see that you are deeply affected," continued she, observing that Lucinda turned pale,

" forgive my officious remarks, for though they may appear illiberal, they proceed from my regard for your honour and happiness.'

Poor Lucinda was so overcome by hearing the sentiments of her mother re-echoed by her friend, that she fainted away. Her sympathizing companion supported her in her arms, and when the fair sufferer had regained sufficient composure, the lively Miss Willoughby rallied her on her excessive sensibility, and after sincere professions of regard, she returned home not a little gratified with having discovered a secret which had so long exercised her curiosity.

Lucinda

Lucinda now assumed a painful reserve towards Mr. Sotheran, in the presence of her parents; and when he proposed the usual evening walk, a gentle negative, accompanied with a deep sigh, was her reply. Her lover, alive to all her emotions when in his presence, was alarmed, and a glance from her expressive blue eyes, convinced him that somewhat of an unfavourable nature had occurred since their last interview.

Not having an opportunity to obtain a verbal explanation, he availed himself of the lover's expedient, and put the following let-

ter into her hand in the course of the evening.

" My dear Lucinda,

" Your refusal to accompa-
" ny me this afternoon, and the
" evident perturbation which you
" felt, has excited those alarms in
" my breast, inseparable from true
" love, when the object suffers any
" pain. Condescend, my amiable
" girl, to explain the cause of your
" uneasiness, and if I can remove it
" I shall be happy. While you feel
" inquietude I feel sympathetic
" sorrow; when joy illumines your
" beautiful countenance, my bosom
" throbs with rapture, and it shall
" be the earnest care of my life,

" as

"as it is the dearest hope of my
"soul, to sympathise with my be-
"loved Lucinda in all her pains
"and pleasures. Your answer,
"my dearest love, will remove the
"present intolerable suspence of
"your truly devoted,

J. SOTHERAN.

This letter imparted the most cordial satisfaction to Lucinda. She pressed it to her beauteous lips and swelling bosom with all the rapture of a lover, and with a trembling hand wrote an answer dictated by unsophisticated tenderness.

 "Sir,

"Sir,

"Your letter afforded me "at once seasonable relief, and "much gratification, as an ad- "ditional proof of the sincerity "and honour of a man for whom "my heart must feel, while capa- "ble of sensibility. You are, Sir, "the cause of my present inquie- "tude; my mother has objected "to the concealment of your con- "nections, which she considers "an implication of some error or "crime, but my heart can never "attach any idea of injustice to "your character. I shall leave "your future conduct towards me "entirely to your own discre- "tion, conscious that a man of

"virtue,

"virtue, will ever act worthy of
"himself. Should you, indeed,
"prove different from what you
"seem to me, the rest of my life
"must be miserable. I am, with
"esteem and affection, your's,

L. GREENHILL.

"P. S. As I cannot, in conse-
"quence of my mother's injunc-
"tion, have the happiness of an
"evening walk with you till the
"mysterious part of your charac-
"ter is explained, yet confiding
"in your honour, I shall meet you
"in my father's garden, about
"twilight to-morrow evening.
"Adieu!"

This faithful transcript of a tender and pure heart, charmed Mr. Sotheran. "How different is the simple dignity of her sentiments," he cried, "to the flimsy affectation of elegance and gallantry contained in the letters of our high bred ladies, with whom one of Reynolds's wretched puns passes for wit, and the drivellings of Cherry for humour. This letter reminds me of the emphatic lines of Pope:

"Heav'n first taught letters for some wretch's aid,
Some banish'd lover, or some captive maid;
They live, they breathe, they speak what love inspires,
Warm from the soul, and faithful to its fires!

The

The virgin's wish without her fears impart,
Excuse the blush and pour forth all the heart;
Spread the soft intercourse from soul to soul,
And waft a sigh from Indus to the Pole!"

True to the assignation, Sotheran concealed himself in a retired arbour in farmer Greenhill's garden on the appointed evening. "*Twilight grey, had in her sober livery all things clad,*" and the calmness and chillness of the air invited to contemplation. The starry heavens appeared in all their glory, irradiated with innumerable orbs, and glittering with various constellations. The fair moon presented her graceful crescent, and Venus shining with superior lustre diffused her mild beams with propitious influence

fluence on the bower of love. In a few minutes, Lucinda retired to the arbour on the tiptoe of apprehension, and was received into the arms of the object of her fondest affections.

After reciprocal whispers and a chaste kiss of love, Mr. Sotheran obtained her consent to become his consort whenever the acquiescence of her parents was granted. The lovers then glowing with all the rapture of reciprocal tenderness, interchanged their solemn vows of eternal constancy, and parted with that "sweet reluctant amorous delay," known only to those who have

have experienced the hopes and fears inseparable from a genuine attachment.

CHAP-

CHAPTER VII.

An explanation—A wedding—Arrival of a party of pleasure—Mr. Sotheran recognised by one of the party—fatal consequences of this incident—Mr. Sotheran deceived—Lucinda carried off and immured in a mad-house near London.

On the morning subsequent to the interesting interview of the lovers, Mr. Sotheran explained his motives for secrecy and seclusion, so much to the satisfaction of farmer Greenhill and his worthy dame, that they gave their consent to an union so much to their honour;

honour; and dame Greenhill felt no small gratification of her vanity in the idea that her daughter would soon be a lady. She communicated to Mr. Sotheran the agreeable intelligence, that her eldest daughter, Mary, was that day to be married to Thomas Hopkins, an opulent young farmer who resided near Hereford, and invited him to the wedding, concluding with a smile, "This marriage is well-timed, as I could not so well have given my consent, that my youngest daughter should wed before her eldest sister, it might have given room to our neighbours to talk, and folks are willing enough to express the sneers

sneers of envy and ill-nature at the happiness of one another." "Yes," replied Mr. Sotheran, "and envy is only a perversion of self-love; the narrow minded are envious of the enjoyments of others, because their own gratification is the sole business of their lives. With respect to your kind acquiescence to my union with Lucinda, I trust you will have no reason to repent it, for it shall be my chief study to make that amiable young woman as happy as her society will render me, for what man of feeling would not enjoy felicity in an intercourse with such perfection!" The good dame scarcely understood the meaning of those

rapturous flights of an enamoured fancy, but with a smile and a curtsey left the apartment.

Sotheran hastened to communicate the pleasing intelligence to his beloved Lucinda, who received it with a bosom glowing with gratitude and affection; gratitude to her dear parents for this additional instance of their readiness to promote her welfare; and inexpressible tenderness for that noble-minded lover who had crowned her hopes by a reciprocal and honourable attachment.

This was a joyous day at farmer Greenhill's. About ten o'clock

o'clock the bridegroom arrived, accompanied by ten young farmers on horseback. He was received by the farmer with that blunt and manly welcome characteristic of the unpolished but sincere husbandman, and more valuable than the studied compliments of polished society. The bride and her sisters were dressed in white, the usual attire on such an occasion, and the two Miss Willoughbys and several of the neighbouring farmers' sons and daughters were invited to the wedding.

About eleven o'clock the marriage was solemnized in the parish church, in the presence of the friends

friends of the young couple, and a considerable number of the villagers whom curiosity had collected. The gentle emotions of the bride, whose aspect was dignified with modesty, and embellished with good-nature, were in a great degree felt by the sympathizing Lucinda, who naturally looked forward to the moment when she should bestow her hand upon her beloved Sotheran. He was also present at the interesting ceremony, which involved the future destiny of two rational beings during life; and he considered marriage, as it ought to be estimated, an inestimable bond of union between two fond hearts, and by which

which the chastity and dignity of both sexes was preserved from the pestiferous influence of illicit passion.

This solemn engagement, in which the vows of love are breathed forth upon the altar of religion, has not only received the sanction and support of wise legislators, but of the Creator himself; its basis is virtuous love, and its summit rational felicity, so beautifully and emphatically described by the bard of Paradise:

"Hail wedded love! mysterious law, true source
Of human offspring. * * * *
* * * * * * * * By thee,
Founded on reason, loyal, just, and pure,

Relations dear, and all the charities
Of father, son, and brother, first were known;
Perpetual fountain of domestic sweets,
Whose bed is undefil'd and chaste pronounc'd.
Here Love his golden shafts employs, here lights
His constant lamp, and waves his purple wings."

Many a virgin heart throbbed with ardour, while the bride expressed her vows of affection and obedience, and many a lovely cheek was illumined by the transient rosy light of a modest blush when the bridegroom impressed his consort's lips with the matrimonial kiss.

Perhaps no topic, not even that of dress and amusement, affords so much

much delight to youthful females as that of wedlock. By anticipation they endeavour to realize the happy moment which is the consummation of all the wishes of love, and though they may affect to treat the topic with gaiety, nay, ridicule, yet they feel that it is indeed a most important event. It has been customary for knaves and fools, in all ages, to deride matrimony, because it is a barrier which the villain cannot pass without detection; a fortress erected for the protection of chastity from the assaults of wantonness. Estimate it as such, then ye amiable and innocent girls, and let not the witticisms of scoundrels or demi-reps induce you

to treat your best protectors with levity or contempt.

A wholesome and abundant dinner was served up at Farmer Greenhill's to his numerous guests, who partook of this refreshment with the relish of health and cheerfulness. After dinner the exhilarating effect of the best Herefordshire cider prompted the festive song, and several gay descriptions of rural life, manners, and felicity, where chaunted in native strains, rendered still more cheering by the full-toned chorus breathed in unison from sound lungs, in the genuine festivity of joy.

The company then sallied forth to a verdant lawn which divided an orchard from a hop-ground, and as it was the beginning of September, the ripe fruitage bending the elastic branches on one side hung tempting to the rambler's hands, and the beautiful clusters of the hop on the other side, appeared decorated with delicate foliage, and supported by the tall poles.

To this sweet spot the youthful part of the company hastened, where the combined harmony of the violin, the hautboy, and the clarionet, invited to the dance. This healthful and delightful amusement combining exercise and pleasure, made the time

time pass imperceptibly, and the exhilarating refreshment of tea prompted the lively partners to a renewal of their gaiety, till the setting sun and the gradual twilight reminded them of the moment of separation.

Mr. Sotheran, whose health was not sufficiently established to enable him to engage in any violent exercise, was content to be a spectator, and witnessed the native agility and untaught grace of the rustic dancers, whose glowing cheeks and sparkling eyes demonstrated the cheerfulness of their minds, while they danced under the azure canopy of heaven, and inhaled the pure pass-

ing breeze, with more enjoyment, innocence, and safety, than the pampered sons and daughters of pride can ever experience beneath the gilt cieling in the spacious assembly-room. The company separated with mutual good wishes, and this ball was the origin of connexions which afterwards terminated in more than one matrimonial engagement.

Happiness now seemed to have made the village of Norton a favorite spot, but an untoward event marred the fairest prospect of permanent content.

Deli-

Delicacy and propriety suggested to Mr. Sotheran his removal to the cottage which was now completely furnished and aired for his reception. He also continued the exercise of his benevolence; and love, that cherisher of exalted sentiments, prompted his charity. Having observed in his intercourse with mankind that indigent travellers were sometimes unable to purchase common necessaries, he appropriated two apartments in the old farm-house to the entertainment of such necessitous wanderers as might occasionally come to Norton. Not that he wished to encourage the degradation of mendicity, but he sympathized with decent poverty, and the indus-

trious mechanic in quest of employment, or the aged parent on a journey to visit those whom nature had made the objects of affection, were sure of a welcome at the "Stranger's Rooms" in Norton.

The singularity of this institution, and the elegance of Sotheran's cottage, become a public topic, and several persons in their excursions down the river Wye, were curious enough to visit Norton.

Among others, an intimate friend of his divorced lady's came to the place, and beheld with envy the little paradise which the taste and opulence of Sotheran had realized.

This

This invidious visitor knew Mr. Sotheran at the first glance, but finding that he himself continued unknown, he resolved to make enquiries in the village respecting the pursuits of the Gentleman-Farmer.

Meeting accidentally with an ignorant clown, who had refused to profit by the farmer's benevolence, the insidious enquirer availed himself of the loquacity and malignity of this worthless fellow, who was eager to put the worst construction on all the actions of Mr. Sotheran.

"This same farmer, or squire, as some folks call him," said the rustic, "is a queerish kind of man. At

first we took him for a highway-man, and afterwards for a French spy, but I dare *saie* we were wrong; but *housomever*, he is *sartinly* not in his right mind, for he is every *daie* fidgetting about with some new crotchet in his pate. He bought farmer Simpson's farm, but the house was not good enough for his gentility forsooth, so he built that gingerbread cottage that stands on the hill as naked as a staff. And what do you think he did with the old farm-house?" "He pulled it down I suppose,"—"No, Sir, he did worse; he turned it into a school, and all the boys and girls in the village will now be philosophers, as the parson says. By the bye, the

parson

parson does not like him at all, and that makes one think that he cannot be good." "Has he any family?" "Why, at present, Sir, he has a housekeeper and two maid servants, and a great savage of an Irishman—d——n his liver! I hate the fellow, though he never did me any harm, *but he is an Irishman, and that is enough.* This upstart squire Sotheran, though he is an *oldish* man, is going to get married to a young wife." "Aye;" and who is she, pray?" "Lucinda Greenhill, the farmer's youngest daughter, that lives in yonder large house that you see among the trees. They *say* they are to be married as soon as squire Sotheran has recovered from

a fever which he got by pulling a fellow out of the river who went to drown himself because he was crossed in love. That's all I can tell you about this odd sort of a farmer."

The enquirer rewarded the rustic with half-a-crown, and resolving to profit by this information, he returned to Ross, where the repudiated Mrs. Sotheran awaited his return with impatience.

The happiness of a man to whom she could never again hope to be reconciled, tortured the bosom of this unhappy woman, with the triple agonies of envy, jealousy, and

revenge. "Since he has exposed my frailty to the world," exclaimed she, "and inflicted incurable misery on my mind, I will make him miserable in turn, or perish in the attempt."

She now, in concert with Mr. Percival, her companion in iniquity, set her invention to work, and a practicable plan was soon laid to render all the felicitous prospects of Mr. Sotheran abortive. It was devised by the lady, that a letter should be sent by post, as from a rich uncle of her injured husband, importing that he lay dangerously ill, and desired an interview; during his absence, Lucinda was to be car-

ried off, and conveyed to a private mad-house, near Wandsworth in Surry, and the business was to be conducted, so that it should appear that the unfortunate girl was torn from her relatives by the villainy of her intended husband.

This dark and diabolical design was carried into execution in two days after it was concerted. A servant was dispatched with a letter to be put into the post-office at Chester, near which Mr. Sotheran's uncle resided. The letter arrived at Norton on the afternoon of the following day. It appeared to have been written by his uncle's secretary, in consequence of the old gentleman being

being unable to write, and it intreated his nephew to hasten to his presence with all possible speed.

Mr. Sotheran instantly ordered Patrick to get ready the horses for their departure, and took only time to bid his Lucinda a hasty adieu, when he mounted his horse, and sat out on his journey. The heart of his fair mistress was distressed at even this temporary absence, but before the parting tear was dried on her cheek, she received a note, as she thought, from Mr. Sotheran, requesting an immediate interview at the King's Head Inn in Ross.

Appre-

Apprehensive that some accident had befallen her lover, she hastened in company with her second sister to the inn, where, instead of meeting Mr. Sotheran, she was ushered into the dining-room, where a lady elegantly dressed arose on her entrance, and saluted her. "You will doubtless," said the malignant woman, with a sigh, "be surprized at not meeting with your lover and my husband here!—Yes," repeated she, "my faithless husband!—I was informed, my dear, that he was on the eve of a marriage with you; and I thought it a duty which I owed to so much innocence, to preserve you from his arts. Will you sign this paper," continued she, hold-

holding an instrument in her hand, "by which you will engage never to become the wife of Sotheran?" "No, madam," exclaimed Lucinda, "I will die before I retract my promise to be his; nor shall the artifices of any individual prevail on me to attach guilt to the noble mind of Sotheran. It cannot be!"

The revengeful woman, burning with anger at this merited reproach, resolved to sacrifice Lucinda to her resentment; she pretended to fall into a fit, and the terrified victim rung the bell for assistance.

Mr. Percival, who was an ear-witness of all that passed, came in, and

and while assisting to restore the lady, he requested Lucinda's unsuspicious sister to hasten to a druggist's for a bottle of hartshorn. During her absence the lady recovered, and requested to be conducted to her chariot, which stood waiting in the street.

Supported by Percival, and the innocent Lucinda, she walked heavily down stairs, and the instant she was handed into the vehicle, she seized one arm of her astonished victim and assisted by her confederate, forced her in. At this moment Percival fastened the door, and while Lucinda filled the air with the cries of horror, the postillions at a signal

signal given, set out at the rate of ten miles an hour.

Lucinda at length exhausted by her efforts to alarm the passengers, and overcome by the horrors of her situation, fainted away; and when the postillions changed horses, she was no longer capable of endeavours to regain her liberty, but sat dissolved in tears in silent agony. Percival, villain as he was, was affected by the distress of the beautiful victim, and whispered to his companion more than once, "Upon my soul, Madam, this is going too far!" "Silence, thou novice," replied the unfeeling adept in the arcana of iniquity, "leave

the management of this adventure to me."

They travelled all night, and in the evening of the following day they reached the doleful receptacle of insanity, a spot where the deepest scenes of villainy had too often been transacted. The house was situated in the middle of an extensive garden, surrounded with a high wall, and to this dreary seclusion the mournful Lucinda was conducted, and resigned to the keeper. He placed her under the care of an old woman, who conducted her to a neat inner apartment.

Lucinda conjectured from the appearance of the place that she was immured in a prison; and the cruelty of her persecutor during the journey, left her without the most distant hope of liberty. One consolation remained—she was innocent!—and throwing herself on her knees, she breathed forth a fervent prayer to the protector of innocence. The serene light of virtue dawned on her soul, dispelling the gloom of despair, and a lively hope that her beloved Sotheran would be able to discover the place of her imprisonment, and restore her to freedom and happiness, inspired her mind.

Re-

Refreshments were brought by her antiquated attendant, who told her to be cheerful, adding with a diabolical grin, "You will not long be obliged to remain here, my pretty one, you deserve more agreeable company than that of an old woman." Lucinda did not comprehend the meaning of the inuendo, but it excited a degree of suspicion in her blameless mind, where that unpleasant visitant was almost unknown.

After supper she examined the bed-chamber and bolted the door, with the caution of a virgin who was obliged to seek repose among her enemies, and again recommending

mending herself to the protection of her Creator, the insensibility of sleep

"Steep'd her senses in oblivion."

CHAP.

CHAPTER VIII.

Mr .Sotheran suspected of villainy—he returns to the village—his grief for the misfortune of Lucinda—Kelly dispatched to discover her situation—aided by the police officers he discovers a young lady in a lunatic hospital.

THE removal of Lucinda from Ross was so sudden as to prevent the possibility of a successful pursuit. While the mistress of the King's Head inn, and the servants, gazed on one another with astonishment, Nancy Greenhill returned with a bottle of hartshorn, but to her surprize and terror she could find

find neither her sister nor the sick lady. All the information which she could obtain was, that her sister was carried off nobody knew whither!

After giving vent to the first emotions of grief, she hastened home with the afflictive tidings. Her father, and several of the neighbouring villagers set out, well mounted and armed, in various directions, but their enquiries were fruitless, and after scouring the country to the distance of twenty miles they returned home one after another, fatigued and disappointed.

In

In the meanwhile Mr. Sotheran arrived at the residence of his uncle, Thomas Walters, Esq. whom he found in perfect health, after a slight fit of the gout, which had, apparently, given him an accession of animal spirits. The old gentleman received his nephew with cordial affection, and heard with surprise the trick that had been played upon him. "My dear nephew," said he, "I feel much obliged to the mischievous, though unknown individual, to whose frolic I am indebted for this visit. You must spend a day or two at Walter-Hall, and give me your opinion of my improvements." Mr. Sotheran expressed his sincere joy at finding his uncle

uncle in such excellent health, and passed a week in the society of an enlightened man, whose conversation revived in his recollection those elegant classical pursuits which had been the occupation of his juvenile hours.

On the other hand, he described his cottage, the scenery on the banks of the Wye, and the simple enjoyments of the industrious inhabitants of Norton, for the entertainment of his uncle, who was so well pleased with the description that he promised to pass a month at the cottage the following summer.

While Mr. Sotheran was thus engaged during his temporary, and to him, tedious absence, from that favourite retirement, which love had rendered so interesting; the suspicion of Lucinda's friends was excited against him. "Let us not be too rash in our counsels," said farmer Greenhill to his afflicted dame, "it is probable that Mr. Sotheran's uncle is dead, and he of course must stay till after the funeral; besides, my dear, it is improbable that his former wife would assist him in the seduction of our daughter. We have every thing to hope from the virtue of Lucinda, and Heaven may soon restore her to our arms." "Ah, William," replied

plied the weeping matron, "I don't much like those gentlemen in disguise; honesty is fair and open, as my father used to say, and deceit of any kind cannot come to good." "Well, well, my love," rejoined the farmer, "I believe you are in the right, but let us at least hear what Sotheran has to say for himself on his return, before we condemn him."

Nor were the suspicions raised to the prejudice of Mr. Sotheran confined to the bosom of dame Greenhill, Miss Willoughby and her sister were outrageous in their censures, and the depraved part of the villagers, who had always beheld the pro-

gress of the beneficent man with an insidious eye, were delighted at this opportunity of loading his character with opprobrium.

"Aye, aye, we thought his new-fangled whims would end in nothing good; what a treacherous villain he must be to carry off Lucinda, and she almost deserved it for keeping company with such a precise fellow, who was old enough to be her father. Fie upon such fellows, it would be right to hunt the dogs at them when they come into our village." Such was the general outcry against Mr. Sotheran among his enemies; while those who

who respected his character were grieved and abashed.

At the expiration of a week Mr. Sotheran left Walter-Hall, and returned with love and expectation to Herefordshire. When he came in sight of the spire of Ross Church, which has been eternized by the verse of Pope, his heart thrilled with rapture, and on coming to an eminence, where he got a glimpse of Norton, he felt a variety of emotions known only to a lover, who is returning to the embraces of his mistress.

Half an hour's hard riding brought him to the door of farmer

Greenhill; he sprung off his horse, and advanced with an open hand, while the farmer, who for a moment eyed him with a scrutinizing gaze, could not resist the conviction of the worth and integrity which beamed in his open smiling countenance, but warmly shook him by the hand, and led him into the house.

The sight of Mr. Sotheran renewed the affliction of dame Greenhill, who could not suppress her sobs and tears. Deep horror seized the heart of Sotheran, a deadly paleness overspread his visage, and for some moments he was unable to articulate a syllable. When he recovered his speech

speech he hastily enquired for Lucinda—but Lucinda was no longer the ornament of Norton—and on hearing of the manner in which she was carried off, his anger and sorrow were excessive. "It was not enough then," exclaimed he, in a tone of anguish, "for that cruel woman to dishonour my bed, and impoison my cup of youthful happiness, but she must also sacrifice another innocent victim to her insatiable criminality. She has bereft me of the most innocent and beauteous creature that I ever knew, and now perhaps enjoys the triumph of her dark designs with her paramour. But the laws of my country shall punish such unparalleled aggression.

I will be the instrument of justice for the protection of my Lucinda."

Farmer Greenhill was now convinced that Mr. Sotheran was innocent of any evil design against his daughter, and gave his approbation of a plan for the discovery of the lovely victim of a wicked woman. The tried fidelity of Patrick Kelly, and his intrepidity, pointed him out as a proper person to assist in this business. He readily undertook the difficult task, and as money was an indispensible requisite to ensure success, Mr. Sotheran gave him a draft on his banker in London for five hundred pounds.

The

The place of Lucinda's confinement or seclusion was indeed unknown, but Kelly, whose sagacity had often been useful to his master, conjectured that the captive had been conveyed to London. He therefore set out for the capital, where, on his arrival, he received the money; and immediately went to the public office in Bow-street, and informed the sitting magistrate of his singular pursuit.

Two experienced police officers were immediately ordered to assist Kelly in his search, and vested with full powers to inspect all suspected places. At the outset Kelly gave the officers fifty pounds a-piece, and

promised them double that sum when the young woman should be discovered. He described the person of Lucinda as accurately as he could, and appointed a place of rendezvous at which they should meet at a certain hour every evening.

During the first week the search was fruitless; the officers explored the bagnios in vain, and Kelly got advertisements published in all the morning papers, addressed to Lucinda, but none of them met her eye, and he almost despaired of discovering her situation.

At length he suggested to the officers the possibility of Lucinda's

being imprisoned, in consequence of which they visited all the prisons. Bedlam and St. Luke's were then explored, and lastly, all the private receptacles for the insane which they knew in the vicinity of London.

At one of their evening consultations it was resolved to inspect the private hospital for lunatics, near Wandsworth. "It is a most infernal place," said one of the officers, "and many instances of successful seduction have, I am informed, occurred within its walls." "My life for it," cried Kelly, starting up, "that the poor young girl is confined there; let us set out immediately.

ately. Night is the best time to discover their devilish transactions." The officers complied, and arrived at the outer gate about two o'clock in the morning. As the porter admitted visitants at all hours, they were conducted into the presence of the keeper, who appeared alarmed at the resolute looks of three athletic men. Before he recovered his presence of mind, the officers produced their authority, and demanded his master-key, which he resigned with great perturbation.

They then proceeded deliberately from room to room, and beheld several unhappy beings who were really insane. Coming to an inner cham-

chamber door they heard the sobs and wailings of a female. "This is the object of our search," whispered they. The door was hastily unlocked, and a lovely young woman sat in tears, with her hair dishevilled, but she was not Lucinda.

The fair mourner started up with a look of apprehension, but Kelly intreated her in a mild tone not to be alarmed. "We are come in search of a beautiful young woman," said he, "who, like yourself, is probably locked up in these horrid apartments. Can you give us any information respecting your fellow-prisoners?" "Yes," replied she, "I can; there was another female, a pri-

a prisoner here for nearly a month, but she was taken away yesterday by the Doctor." "What was her name?" "Lucinda: she was the daughter of a farmer in Herefordshire." "That's the person we are in search of," cried Kelly, with quickness, "and as you are probably also the victim of some enemy, I pledge my word to liberate you, if possible." "Generous man!" exclaimed the lovely creature, pressing his hand to her lips, I am indeed shut up here by the injustice of a cruel man." "Then you shall be emancipated," exclaimed Kelly, "as soon as possible, after I have first performed my duty to my employer. Here are five guineas; though

though you probably do not value money yourself, it will obtain you more respect and attention from your attendants. Farewell! we shall soon revisit you." With these words he left the apartment, and again closing the door, hurried down to the keeper, whom he interrogated respecting the Doctor who had carried away Lucinda.

Unwilling to betray his colleagues, and bring certain ruin on himself and them, the keeper, who was a resolute man, assumed an air of defiance, and refused to make any confession. "Then you must go with us to Bow-street," said Kelly. "You have no authority to summon

summon me thither," replied the other; "I know the law too well to be terrified at your windy menaces." "Does such a lawless villain presume to demand the protection of those laws which he daily breaks," cried Kelly, while a glow of indignation suffused his face. The keeper aimed a blow with a poker at his head, but Kelly dexterously warded it off, and by the application of his fist to the eye of his opponent, he laid him breathless at his feet. When he revived, he raised an outcry for assistance, but the sounds of misery had been too familiar to the ears of his inmates, and he might have yelled till sunshine

before

before one of them would have come to succour him.

Finding himself over-matched, his resolution failed, and he consented, on a promise of pardon, to make a full discovery of his accomplices. The officers then took possession of the keys, and one of them remained in the hospital, while the other and Kelly accompanied the keeper to town.

END OF VOL. I.

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